

A BRIEF  
EXPOSITION  
OF THE *First and Second Epistles*  
First and Second EPISTLES  
General of *St. Peter*  
PETER.

BY  
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Minister at LRVVIM.

Joh. 8. 30.  
*Search the Scriptures, for in them ye stand, and eternal life, and they are they which testify of me.*

1 Cor. 2. 2.  
*For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.*

EDINBURGH,  
Printed by Christopher Hogg,  
Close, over against the Tower,  
4<sup>th</sup> Decr. 1678.





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To the R E A D E R.

CHRISTIAN READER,

**G** O D, who is wonderfull in counsel, and excellent in working, and whose way is in the Sea, and His path in great waters, doth so in all Ages order the holy Dissolutions of His Providence, as (however our eyes are soon dazzled, and our weak judgements soon confounded, in studying thereof; yet) His holy Purposes concerning the advancement of His Kingdom, and the good of His People, are still effectual and carri'd-on. In tempestuous and gloomy times. He alloweth such as have fled to Him for refuge, to believe that it is He who sitteth at the Helm in all affairs; who doth all things well, and will make all things work together for good to them who love Him, although they cannot distinctly perceive him to do so. When He letteth-out dangers of affliction, and other sharp trials upon His People, It is but to draw them to His Mercy, since either Adversities, cannot prevail to bring them up to abide and delight in Him, that He may crush, and take away from them soul-destroying lusts, which they would not renounce; and may smelt all their idols, that they may worship Him. And though He do let loose tempests upon His Vineyard, which threaten to consume it; yet not only will it be found in-and, that very season, are but Instruments to execute His Purposes, and

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## To the Reader.

He only what His Hand and Counsel determined best to be done, and that he both can and will, in due time, give meat out of such eaters, and make the letting-loose of errors and troubles contribute to draw His People to love and embrace the Truth more cordially, and lay up their treasure where neither moth nor rust can corrupt, nor thieves break through and steal: But He can and doth also carry-on His Work in the hands of His own Servants amidst all these disadvantages, and causeth His Wall to be built, even in troublous times.

Herein the Lord hath given very ample proof of His magnified mercy toward His Church in this Island, whom though He hath been, and yet is exercising with such variety of distempers, confusion and errors, as if all the Locusts of the bottomlesse-pit were let loose upon us; Yet we cannot but acknowledge his singular favour, in that he not only continueth his Truth among us, hiding us and it in the hollow of his hand, and preserving a Ministry whom he is pleased to own in the discharge of their Calling; But that he stirreth up and enableth so many, according to the Talents they have received, to lay forth themselves for propagating of Knowledge, Truth, and the power of Godliness, in the present and succeeding Generations. As the Lord hath given us an **ORTHODOX CONFES-  
SION OF FAITH**, and **CATECHISM**, and a **DIRECTORY FOR WORSHIP** according to the pattern shewed in the Mount; So we may say, that no Age hath had greater helps for vindicating and clearing the Truths we profess, and for helping Christians in the understanding of the Scriptures, and walking therein in the Way of Duty. And as some have taken pains to communicate the Labours of for-  
reign

# A BRIEF EXPOSITION Of the first Epistle General of P E T E R.

## THE ARGUMENT.

Although this Apostle was in a very mean and low condition before his calling, Mat. 4. 18. and wanted not but manifold failings thereafter, Mat. 16. 22 and 26: 70. Gal. 2. 14. yet by the free grace of God, he was brought to be one of the chief of Christ's greatest glory on earth, Mat. 27. 12. and of his holdest sufferings, Mat. 26. 27. to conduct many souls, Act. 2. 41. to write this excellent Epistle, and so do a Martyr, 2 Pet. 1. 14. compared with John 21. 18. 19. Which considerations of him, may serve to commend to the Church the truths delivered by him.

The Epistle is directed to the Christian Jews, of whom he had gotten a special charge, Gal. 2. 7. and of which communion he had been a prime instrument, Act. 1. 13. &c.

The special occasion of his writing to them, (as appears in the strain of his Doctrine) was the raging Persecution, the prevalence of Error, and some decay of grace and holiness among them, together with the present opportunity of a Messenger to carry the Epistle, 1 Pet. 5. 2. who had been so eminent, and publicly to explain the same to them, 2. 12.

The principal scope, is, to confirm Believers in the true Faith, to stir them up to constant and diligent use of the Word of God, and to exhort them to holiness and good works.

serings for it, to grow in grace, and to adorn their profession by a holy walking in their several relations: as appears by comparing 1 Pet. 5, 12. where he resumes his scope in this Epistle, with 2 Pet. 3, 1. where he expresseth his scope in both.

The principal parts of this Epistle are three. In the first (after the Preface, Chap. 1. ver. 1, 2.) the Apostle giveth such a description of the excellent spiritual condition of Believers, as might provoke them to joy under their saddest sufferings, and engage them to these duties of holiness which he presseth in the rest of the Epistle: and this is to the 13. ver. of the 1. chap. The second part containeth severall exhortations, with motives pressing the same, to such duties of holiness, as that most excellent state doth oblige all Christians unto, whatsoever their relations or condition be in the world: and this is to the 13. ver. of the 2. chap. In the third part the Apostle presseth such duties of holiness as are suitable for Christians, considered under their civil, domestick, or Church relations; and especially such as belong to those who are in a condition of suffering for Christ and his Truth: and this is to the 10. ver. of the 3. chap. After which is the end of the whole Epistle.

## CHAP. I.



He parts of this Chapter are two. In the first (after the Preface of the whole Epistle, containing a description of the Pen-man of it, and of the parties to whom it is directed, ver. 1, 2.) the Apostle incites suffering Christians to praise God, by raising the song before them: wherein he makes clear how excellent their spiritual estate was: and holds forth what reasons they had from it of cheerfulness and constancy under all their sufferings, to wit: 1. Their regeneration, ver. 3. 2. Their matchless sufferings, ver. 4. 3. The certainty of their performance, ver. 5. 4. The reward of their sufferings, ver. 6. and 5. the necessity of all these

sufferings, *ver. 6.* 6. Their spiritual advantage by them, to wit, the tryall of their graces, especially of their faith, *ver. 7.* 7. The happy effects of that faith, which by tryals is discovered to be sound, *ver. 8, 9.* 8. The excellency of the Doctrine of Salvation for which they did suffer, which is proven by the great pains and delight of the Prophets, Apostles, and Angels in the study thereof, *ver. 10, 11, 12.*

In the second part, are contained several exhortations to the study of holiness, with motives pressing the same. As, 1. Seing they had those excellent priviledges formerly mentioned, they should therefore study perseverance and growth in grace, *ver. 13.* 2. Considering that they were now made *Children*, they should therefore love their Fathers obediently, and not live as they had done formerly, *ver. 14.* 3. Seing their Calling was to be holy, And, 4. the holiness of God did oblige them to that study, *ver. 15, 16.* 5. Since their Father was to be their Judge. And, 6. themselves were but strangers in the world. Therefore they should live in fear of offending him, *ver. 17.* 7. Considering that they were bought from their former sinfull courses with a most excellent price, *ver. 18, 19.* 8. That their Redeemer was from eternity designed for them, and ~~more~~ manifestly manifested in their time than formerly, *ver. 20.* 9. Seing the Father had exalted Christ after his sufferings, that Believers may be the more confident that Justice is fully satisfied for them, *ver. 21.* And, 10. seing they had already made some good progress in mortification, therefore they should study to grow, especially in love to the Saviour, *ver. 22.* 11. Considering that their spiritual original was excellent, *ver. 23.* And lastly, that their spiritual life was not fading, as the best things in nature are, but should be loved to endure for ever, as the Word, which is the principle of it doth, *ver. 25.* Therefore they ought to live to their Fathers honour in the study of holiness.

Verſ. 1. *Peter an Apoſtle of Jeſus Chriſt, to the ſtrangers ſcattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Aſia, and Biſhynia.*

**I**N this part of the Inſcription, the Pen-man of the Epiſtle doth firſt make himſelf known, by that new name which Chriſt gave him, *Joh. 1. 42.* and by his Office, common to him with other Apoſtles, who had immediate Commiſſion, and extraordinary Aſſiſtance from the Son of God to preach the Goſpel, and to work Miracles for confirmation of the ſame, and were not fixed, as ordinary Miniſters are, to any particular Charge, *Act. 16. 1. and 18. 19.* Next he deſcribeth the perſons to whom this Epiſtle was firſt directed; from their afflicted external condition, to wit, that they were baniſhed from their own Country and wanted priviledges, and ſcattered in many places of the world, whereof ſome are here mentioned. From the Apoſtles deſcription of himſelf, we may Learn, 1. When the Miniſters of Jeſus Chriſt are entering upon any part of their publick Employment, it is then eſpecially neceſſary for them to have in their hearts the ſenſible conſideration, of what honour Chriſt hath put upon them, what engagements to be faithful to Him, what warrant they have from Him to go about their Employment, and what an one He is from whom they have their Calling, that ſo they may carry along in their hearts ſome holy fear of ſlighting the work of ſuch a one as the Son of God, to whom they muſt give an account, *Heb. 13. 17.* and may have much encouragement, conſidering that their Commiſſion is from Him, who hath all fulneſs, *Col. 1. 19.* to furniſh them, and ſupply the peoples neceſſities: for, the Apoſtle, entering upon this part of his employment, to wit, the writing of this Epiſtle, hath had in heart the conſideration of that new name wherewith Chriſt honoured him, and wherefore He would have him conſtantly mindful of his duty, that he ſhould be according to the ſignification of his name, *Joh. 1. 42.* ſteadfaſt in a

*Rock or Stone* in his Masters service; and likewise of his Commission from so honourable and glorious a Master, as the anointed Saviour of Sinners, while he writes, *Peter an Apostle of Jesus Christ.* 2. When the message of Christs Ministers is much slighted, and opposed, and their Calling much questioned, it is necessary for them openly to avow and assert their Authority from Him; that people, perceiving Ministers not afraid to avow themselves, and their Calling from Christ, upon all hazards, may be encouraged to embrace, and adhere to the Truths they deliver; and having their minds raised above instruments, the Truths delivered may have the greater weight with them: for, upon these grounds we may safely conceive the Apostle to prefix his name to this Epistle, and to avow his Office, even in a time of persecution; *Peter an Apostle of Jesus Christ.* 3. There hath never been any supremacy over the rest of the Apostles conferred upon *Peter*, neither did he ever assume any such thing to himself; and consequently did never cast a copy to any Minister to usurp, or affect any such thing over their fellow-labourers: for, if there had been any such thing, of so great concernment as the Church of *Rome* makes it, it cannot be thought, but this Apostle would have found himself bound to assert it: which if he had done any where, it could not be expected in a sifter place, than in the entry of his Writings, where the Prophets and Apostles usually assert to themselves as much dignity as the Lord allows them; And yet neither here, nor in the following Epistle, is there any such thing, but at the most, *Peter an Apostle* (or, Messenger) *of Jesus Christ.*

From the first branch of the description of those to whom the Epistle is directed, we may *Learn*, 1. That exile, and separation from outward comforts and privileges, may be the lot of the people who are dearest to the Lord of any on earth besides; even those may be corrected, and humbled for the abuse of their mercies. 2. That by their means, in their exile and separation,



the Lord minds to spread the seeds of saving knowledge among strangers to Him, *Micah* 9. 7. *Zach.* 10. 9. for which, and the like causes, the Christian Hebrews, to whom the Apostle writes, were called here *strangers scattered*, &c. 2. Although the Lords afflicted people, by reason of their ignorance and unbelief, are very prone to conclude themselves forgotten and forsaken of him, *Isa.* 49. 14. Yet those, who under their affliction are humbling themselves for sin, and cleaving to the Truth and way of God, may be confident, that the Lord not only takes notice of their sad condition, and of all the places of their sufferings; but that He will provide some substance for them there, while He hath service for them; and will also, as it needfull, follow them through all those places, and all their miseries, with real testimonies of His love and respect; whereof He giveth here a proof, while by the hand of this Apostle He sendeth to those Christian Jews (who, though they were justly for their sins shut out of their own Land, yet wanted not means of subsistence in all the places of their exile) so sweet and seasonable a message as this Epistle, directed to the *Strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia*.

*Verf. 2. Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you and peace be multiplied.*

This last part of the Inscription, contains the second branch of the Description of those to whom the Epistle is directed, together with the Apostles salutation of them. They are here described from their most excellent spiritual condition, to comfort them against their fore-mentioned sad outward condition, to wit, that they were snatched out from among others, as the word *Elect* signifies, which may be safely understood both of the Lords eternal purpose of love toward them, in which sense the

the word *Elect* is taken, *Matth.* 20. 16. as also of his actual separating of them from the rest of the world in their effectual Calling, as the word is taken, *Job.* 15. 16. And that not for any foreseen good that they were to do, but according as the Lord, in his eternal foreknowledge, having all *Adam's* posterity in his eye, had freely descended upon them, and appointed them to come by any way of faith and holiness (which his own Spirit was to work in them) to the full enjoyment of all that Christ had purchased for them, by his fulfilling of the Law, and satisfying for the breach thereof. To these, in the salutation, the Apostle wisheth the proofs of Gods favour in a continual increase of all saving graces, and true peace, with God, with others, and with their own consciences. From this second branch of the Description of those to whom the Epistle is directed, we may *Learn*, 1. Although none, in an ordinary way, can infallibly know the election, or effectual calling of another, *Rev.* 2. 17. yet it is not impossible for the Elect and Called themselves to attain to some comfortable measure of the knowledge thereof, the Lord having taken so much pains to give the marks of such in his Word, and to describe a saving work by the effects thereof, which are proper to the Elect and effectually called Ones, *Job.* 6. 37. 2 *Pet.* 2. 7. 9. and having promised his Spirit to make his own know their privileges, 1 *Cor.* 2. 12. for, it is asserted here, as Christians chief Consolation against their sad outward condition spoken of before, that they are *Elect*. Now this could be no more consolation to them that were eternally elected, and effectually called, than to any other Members of the Church, except they might know themselves to be such as are here described; and there can be no question but their consolation is plainly intended, while they are thus spoken to, *Elect, according to the foreknowledge of God.*

2. Where there may be discerned in Christians a serious and constant profession of the Truth of Christ, and endeavours to walk suitably thereunto, there is the

ground for others to esteeme and deal with them, as with those that are the Elect of God, and in time effectually called: for, though there be no ground to think that all to whom the Apostle writes were such; Yet, because he did intend to edifie the Elect and Regenerate, and in charity did esteeme them to be serious and constant Professors of the Truth, even in a suffering time, and to be aiming at an answerable walking thereunto, he calls them here, *Elect, according to the foreknowledge of God*, 3. Those who are powerfully drawn to believe in Jesus Christ, and are changed by his Spirit and have his Spirit present, manifesting their change to be such as the Word approves for saving, have a well grounded confidence of their election or effectual calling: for, those whom the Apostle here calls, *Elect, according to the foreknowledge of God*, are afterward at large described to be such as had a saving work of grace in them, to wit, saving faith in Christ, *ver. 6.* some good degree of mortification, *ver. 21.* and were daily employers of Christ for growth in grace and holinesse, *chap. 2. ver. 4.* and had the Spirit of Jesus resting upon them, *chap. 4. 14.* 4. The Lord doth not choose some sinners from among others, whether in his eternal purpose of love, or in their effectual calling, because he did foresee them to make good use of their free-will, for converting or sanctifying of themselves; but only because his Majesty, having all persons whom he purposed to frame unto salvation, under his all-seeing eye, did out of his free love condescend upon some in particular, while others were past by: for, those here, who according to the foreknowledge of God, are chosen to salvation, are also chosen to come to the profession of it through that which the Lords Spirit worketh in them: and so there can be nothing foreseen in them to proceed from the right use of their free-will, which can be a motive to him to choose them, since their sanctification is a work of his own Spirit, and they are not elected to salvation for it, but through it to salvation, as a mean of his own working in them, *according to the foreknowledge of God, through*

*through sanctification of the Spirit.* 5. When we consider the Lord in that act of choosing some to eternal life, we ought to consider him as a Father, both of Christ the Mediator, and of all those whom he doth elect: for, though Christ did not merit electing love, in regard that love moved God to give Christ for sinners, *Job. 3. 16.* yet we are allowed to conceive the Lord in that same act of appointing some to everlasting blessednesse, to be also appointing his own Son to be their Redeemer, and so to be the Purchaser of that blessednesse for them; and so to be putting on a fatherly affection towards them in him, *Job. 1. 4.* That which doth cost us many thoughts, and which we do, in a manner, break in many pieces in our conception, was but one eternal act of God, whose absolute perfection doth not admit of such succession in his thoughts or purposes, as he allows us to have in our thoughts concerning these: for, while the Apostle speaks of Election according to the foreknowledge of God, he calls him *the Father.* 6. All who are chosen to partake of that everlasting blessednesse which Christ hath purchased, are appointed to come to the possession of it through *sanctification*, whereby their minds are enlightened to see their woful condition by nature, *Revel. 3. 17, 18.* to see the possibility and excellency of a better estate, *Ephes. 1. 17, 18.* their hearts are powerfully inclined to close with Christ, *Job. 6. 44, 45.* and they are enabled to forefakc sin, and follow after that which is well-pleasing in the sight of God, *Jam. 1. 27.* and so the whole man is leparated for the Lords use, *2 Tim. 2. 21.* which is sanctification in a large sense: for, these whom the Apostle affirms here to be elected to partake of what Christ hath purchased, he doth clearly intimate, that they must come to it *through sanctification.* 7. It is not in the power of mans free-will, or of any creature whatsoever, to work any good motion or inclination in a sinners heart, (that is the work of the Spirit of God alone:) for, sanctification which comprehends all gracious qualities, is called the *work of the spirit.* 8. Jesus Christ our Lord and his blood

obeyed the Law perfectly for us, that he might make up the defects of our imperfect obedience, *Col. 2. 10.* and cast us a perfect copy; which we are bound to aim at in conformity, *Heb. 12. 2.* and likewise hath born all that wrath which was due to all the Elect for their breach of the Law, that so deserved wrath might passe over all his redeemed ones, (as the destroying Angel passed by those whose doors were sprinkled with the blood of the Paschal Lamb, to which the Apostles expression here alludes) for both these, which are commonly called Christs active and passive obedience, are here expressed by the Apostle, while he saith, *Elect, &c. unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ. 9.* All the Elect will certainly partake of all that Christ hath purchased by his doing and suffering for them; the first fruits whereof they get in time, and the full harvest afterward: none of them can fall short of what they are from eternity destinated unto: for, the Apostle saith here, they are chosen *unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Christ,* which is nothing else, but to be chosen to lay hold on both by faith, and at last fully to enjoy what both hath merited for them. 10. Although Christs fulfilling of the Law, and suffering for our breach thereof, which is here called his *obedience, and the sprinkling of his blood,* be in order first imputed to us for justification, before our sanctification, *Rom. 8. 30.* Yet our assurance and comfort of our interest in his obedience and sufferings, is not had till after our sanctification, See *Job. 14. 21.* for, to be elect through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ, is to be from eternity chosen to come by the way of holiness to the full participation of what Christ hath purchased by his obedience and sufferings, to wit, peace and joy in the holy Ghost here, and the full enjoyment of God hereafter: both which are the purchase of his obedience and sufferings, to which we are elected; *Elect unto obedience, and sprinkling, &c.* When we consider that great work which consisteth in the salvation of lost sinners, we are

are to look upon all the Persons of the blessed Trinity as concurring therein, that so we may have the higher esteem of the work, which hath such agents, and may have our hearts raised to give equal glory to all the Persons: for, though our Election, Redemption, Sanctification and Glorification, be each of them the work of the whole Deity, and none of the Persons are to be excluded from any of these; Yet the Scripture alloweth us to have such thoughts anent the order of the Persons in working, as we may have anent the order of their subsistence: for, here the Apostle sets forth the *Father*, out of his good pleasure electing sinners to grace and glory; the *Son*, by his obedience and suffering, purchasing the same for them; and the *Spirit*, by his vertue and power, working grace in them, and so preparing them for that blessedness, which the Father hath appointed, and Christ hath purchased for them: *Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.* From the salutation, *Learn*, 1. The Ministers of Christ, while they are dealing with the Lords People, should labour for enlarged desires after their welfare, so will they be the more serious and affectionate in dealing with them; their pains will be the more sweet to themselves, and the more acceptable to, and successful with, the people: for, the Apostles ordinarily begin their Epistles, with such ample expressions of their desires after the good of those to whom they writ, as this Apostle doth here; *Grace and peace be multiplied unto you.* 2. No lesse than a continual increase of the proofs of Gods favour, and of all saving graces, together with true quietness of spirit, and every blessing of God necessary for the same, is the Lord's allowance to his redeemed and sanctified ones: whatever measure of this allowance any of them have received, there is still more of it to be had; and still more of it will be given to them, except their unbelief, and other sins obstruct the outletting thereof: for, all things shall more abundantly flow forth upon them, and be more plentifully poured out upon them.

this salutation, *Grace and peace be multiplied unto you.* 3. It is only those who are fled to Christ's merits, and are begun to be changed by his Spirit, who can expect this comfortable allowance to be letten forth to them; and those only Christ's Ministers may in his Name certifie of it: for, it is only those who are described in the former part of the Verse, to whom this is spoken; and this is not only a favourable wish of the Apostles, but a definitive sentence of the Spirit of God passed in their favours. That *Grace and peace shall be multiplied unto them.*

*Verſ. 3. Blessed be the God, and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.*

Here the Apostle enters upon the first part of the Chapter, wherein he sets forth the excellency of the state of Believers in Jesus Christ, that thereby he may confirm them in the Truth, comfort them under their sufferings, and inforce upon them the study of holiness, which are his principal scope in the whole Epistle: And this part he begins with a song of praise to God, which all Believers should follow in their hearts: the reasons of which song, contains their priviledges, whereof every one doth prove their state to be most excellent, and that therefore they ought to be constant sufferers, and holy walkers. The first reason is, That they had a new spiritual life, and nature communicated to them in their Regeneration, whereby they were now made Children of God; and this priviledge is described, and commended, 1. From the Author thereof, that it is God, and the Father of such a Son as Christ, who hath made us his children. 2. From the impulsive cause moving him so to do, to wit, nothing in us, but mercy in him, which is commended from the plenty or abundance of his love. This priviledge of Regeneration is commended from the effect thereof, whereby the Regenerate are made

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made to hope for those excellent things, spoken of in the following words. The nature of which hope is cleared, 1. From the propertie, or effect of it, it is lively, quickning the soul that hath it: And, 2. From the ground of it, which is the cause of its liveness, to wit, that our Cautioner, who died in our room, is risen to apply his purchase, and to possesse us in it. Hence we may learn, 1. The way to make Christians stedfast in the Truth, chearful under their sufferings for it, and thriving in holinesse, is to have their hearts brought to a praising disposition, from the consideration of their spirituall priviledges, and the excellency of the state of grace wherein they are, their hearts being thereby sweetly diverted from sad reflections upon their outward afflictions, and strongly encouraged to hold on in the way of truth and holinesse, notwithstanding of all discouragements: for the Apostle's scope being to confirm and comfort sufferers, and to provoke them to the study of holinesse, he labours first of all to engage their hearts to this exercise of praise, by raising this Psalm before them, *Blessed be the God and Father, &c.* 2. They are fittest to chear up the hearts of others to spirituall joy and praise, who have their own hearts kept so sensible of the excellent state of believers, because of their spirituall priviledges, that they are ready to burst forth in the praises of God themselves, and go before others in that exercise, as they have calling and opportunity: for, the Apostle being to comfort those heavy hearted exiles under their sufferings, and provoke them to praise, hath his own heart so full, that he must break forth in singing before them, *Blessed be the God and Father, &c.* 3. Our praise, or blessing of God, is not any addition of blessednesse to him, who is in that respect especially, above all blessing and praise, *Neb. 9. 5.* but it is only our acknowledgment of his praise-worthy perfections, and of his goodnesse to sinners, that they may fall in love with him, and join with us in the same acknowledgements, that is, that which is translated, *Blessing*.



men, signifies to speak well of him. 4. Of all the spirituall priviledges bestowed upon sinners in time, which call them to joy and praise, the first and principall, is their Regeneration, whereby they who are dead in sins and trespasses, and born heirs of Gods curse, have a new life communicated to them, *Eph. 2. 1, 3.* and such heavenly qualities stamped upon their soul, as makes them in some measure resemble their heavenly Father, *Eph. 4. 24.* for the Apostle puts our Regeneration for the first reason of this song, *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath begotten us again.* 5. This change of a sinners nature, which is made in Regeneration, is the alone work of the omnipotent God, as the principall and efficient cause, wherein he makes use of men as instruments in his hand, *1 Cor. 4. 15.* and of the Word from them as his means, *Jam. 1. 18.* There being no more power in man, naturally to work this change in himself, than can be imagined in any man to have begotten himself: Therefore is it set forth here by such a word as may lead all the Regenerate to consider themselves as wholly passive when first this change is made upon them: *Blessed be the God, &c. who hath begotten us again.* 6. It doth exceedingly commend the free love of God in making this change upon sinners, and may much highten in their hearts the esteem of his work, that He, who hath such a Son as Jesus Christ, who was, and is his peer and equal, *Philip. 2. 6.* the express Image of his Person, *Heb. 1. 3.* and his full delight, *Prov. 8. 30.* should have vouchsafed upon such unworthy things as we are, so sweet and honourable a relation to himself, and that blessed Son of his, as is imported in this his begetting of us again! the esteem whereof the Apostle heightens in his own heart, and in the hearts of the Regenerate by this, That it is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath begotten us again. 7. The Lord is moved to bestow his grace upon sinners, by any good, which he can see or find in them, being none can give first to him, *14. 35.* nor be profitable to him.

him *Job 32. 2.* who needeth nothing from any; *Job 17. 25.* but only by his own mercy, which is that lovely property whereby he is strongly inclined to let out of his goodnesse to unworthy and miserable sinners, who deserve the contrary from him: for, here *Mercy* is made the alone and sufficient motive of our regeneration, while the Apostle saith, *According to his mercy he hath begotten us.* 8. That mercy which moves the Lord to work a saving change upon any sinner, is both very plentiful for the quantity of it, and most excellent for the quality of it, and it must be so, there being so many provocations found and foreseen in sinners, which only plentiful mercy can overcome, *1sa. 48. 8.* and so many excellent favours bestowed upon the Regenerate as never entered in their hearts to conceive, *1 Cor. 2. 9.* that it must be excellent mercy that doth bestow them. Therefore, that which moves the Lord to regenerate sinners, is not simply called *Mercy*, but *abundant mercy*, which in the Original signifies, not only the plenty of it for quantity, but also the excellency and worth of it for quality. 9. The Regenerate come not presently to the possession of what Christ hath purchased for them, they must be first tryed, whether they will glorifie him, by living in the confident expectation of what he hath purchased and promised, which is *hope* flowing from *faith*, and only differing from it in this, that *faith* apprehends the thing promised as if it were present, so giving it a spiritual kind of subsistence in the soul, *Heb. 11. 1.* and *hope* makes the heart, with some measure of chearfull patience, expect that good which it looks upon as absent for the time, *Rom. 8. 25.* for, the want of possession for a time after regeneration, is imported in this, that we are *begotten again unto a lively hope.* 10. Before the Lord make this powerful change upon sinners in regeneration, they are altogether without any true and well-grounded hope of a better life than this, what-ever strong and groundless presumptions thereof they may entertain: for, as it is supposed in this, that we are *begotten again* unto a better life, so it is

have gotten a new life and nature from the Lord  
 regeneration, have gotten therewith this grace of hope  
 to have his allowance to keep up their hearts in the  
 exercise of all that he hath promised: and, though  
 their doubtance and unbelief doth often mar the exercise  
 of this grace, *Lam. 3. 18.* yet they must again attain unto  
 the treasure of the exercise thereof, *Lam. 3. 24.* it be-  
 cometh a special act of the new life which is given in rege-  
 neration, and is here made the immediate effect of it, as  
 is witnessed in this, *He hath begotten us again unto a lively hope.*  
*1. 3. 12.* The hope of the Regenerate, is a lively hope,  
 quickning them in the use of all means for attaining to  
 that they hope for, *Heb. 12. 28.* and for keeping of  
 themselves free of every thing unsuitable for them, who  
 are born to so great hopes, *1. Job. 3. 3.* for, it is here de-  
 scribed from the property or effect of it; it is a *lively hope.*  
 13. That which keeps the hope of the Regenerate in life  
 and exercise, and is the solid ground and cause thereof, is  
 that Christ their Cautioner having once died in their  
 room, is now risen as a conquerour over all their spiritual  
 enemies, *Col. 2. 15.* in testimony that he is fully discharged  
 of all their debts, and they in him, *Rom. 1. 4.* and *4. 25.*  
 whereby also they are certified that they shall rise, and  
 share with him in the possession of what he hath purcha-  
 sed, and possesseth in their name, *Job. 14. 2, 3.* *1. Cor. 4.*  
*14.* for, the ground and cause of this lively hope, is here  
 made, *the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.*

*Verf. 4. To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and  
 that fadeth not away, reserved in Heaven for you.*

The second reason of that Song of praise which all the  
 Regenerate should keep up in their hearts, is, that they  
 have a matchless inheritance to look for beyond time,  
 which is both excellent in it self, and made very sure for  
 them. The excellency of it the Apostle sets forth by three  
 properties of it, which prove it to excell very far all  
 carnal inheritances. That it hath nothing in it self,  
 which

which doth incline it toward any decay. 2. That it admit of nothing from without to stain the beauty or excellency of it : And therefore, 3. it doth remain eternally in its primitive and native lustre : and we are sweetened by this, That it is safely kept for the regenerate, in a place above all hazard. Hence let us see the blessed state which the Regenerate have good ground to hope for, is so matchless and excellent, that it cannot be set out by any thing here away : The best inheritance here inclines to a decay, is still defiled and fading one way or other ; but this inheritance is incorruptible, undefiled, and fadeth not away. Many words cannot commend it sufficiently : for, here are several, and those both taphorick and negative, to tell us that we may more easily conceive and expresse, what it is not, and what it is like, than what it is. 2. If the Lords People would keep their hearts in a praising disposition, if they would be constant and chearfull in their adherence to the Truth of Christ, notwithstanding of sufferings, they must have their hearts much taken up with the consideration of the excellency of their portion, which is made sure for them beyond time ; So will they undervalue afflictions by the way, 2 Cor. 4. 17, 18. and rejoyce under them, Rom. 5. 2, 3. So will they despise the pleasures of sin, Heb. 11. 24. and sweetly digest all pains in the duties of holiness, 2 Cor. 5. 8, 9. for, the Apostle, to work up the hearts of those to whom he writes, towards this frame, doth here commend and propose to their consideration, the excellency of their inheritance, that it is *incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away*. 3. This inheritance, which the Regenerate are born unto, and have good ground to hope for, is nothing else but the Lord himself blessed for ever, to be enjoyed by them to all eternity : for, what is here attributed to it, is elsewhere in Scripture attributed to him. He is the *Inheritance of his People*, Psal. 16. 5, 6. *incorruptible*, Rom. 1. 23. *undefiled*, Heb. 7. 26. and *that fadeth not away*, Psal. 102. 27. 4. This heavenly inheritance of the Saints doth not come to them by their own

chase or procurement, but by vertue of their fellowship. *Rom. 8. 17.* which they have immediately upon their dying with Christ, *Job. 1. 12.* as a thing purchased to them by their Father. *Eph. 1. 14.* who hath left it to them in legacy. *Job. 17. 24.* and lives for ever to be the Executor of his own Testament, *Mal. 7. 27.* and is so far from being mocked by any of them, that it falls as it were by lot, as *Israel's* inheritance in *Canaan* did, to which the Apostle here alludes, while he sets forth everlasting blessedness by this word *inheritance*, which signifies a thing come by heirship, left in legacy, and fallen by lot. *3.* This blessed state is made very sure for the Regenerate, being from eternity decreed unto them, *Mat. 25. 44.* secured to them in time by the promise of the faithfull God, *Job. 6. 40.* and now possess'd by their Surety and Head in their name, *Heb. 6. 19. 20.* for the Apostle saith, it is reserved in Heaven for them.

*Vers. 3. Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.*

The third reason of the joy and constancy of suffering Believers, is, That their perseverance is made sure, the Almighty Power of God being imployed as their guard and safe conduct by the way, to strengthen their faith, and keep it from failing, till they come to the possession of their inheritance which is ready for them; and for the communication whereof, the particular time is fixed and set. Hence *Learn, 1.* The Lord hath a great mind that the joy and consolation of the heirs of salvation should be strong and full, fore-knowing that they are ready to apprehend much matter of fear and uncertainty, he guards them on every hand, having assured them in the former words, that their excellent inheritance was above hazard of being lost; here he certifies them that they are no lesse sure, and beyond all hazard of being lost in their way to the possession of it: An earthly inheritance may be sure enough kept for an Heir, but who can secure

Service, in wit, an undoubted right to the salvation of his soul through Christ: for, the word, *Receiving*, whereby the Apostle expresseth the act of Faith, hath in it a metaphor from those Wrestlers, who after the victory are taking the prize, and carrying it; and the word, which is here translated the *end of Faith*, may be also understood the *reward of it*; *Receiving the end of your Faith, the salvation of your souls.* ¶ Whatever a Believer may lose upon his journey, seeing he is sure to come well to the end of it, and hath his better part, the soul, beyond peril, he may joyce in the midst of all sufferings by the way: for, this may safely be taken for the nearest cause of that joy unspeakable and full of glory, which Believers have, that while they did exercise their Faith, they were *receiving the end of their Faith*, or, the reward of it, *that the salvation of their souls.*

Verf. 10. *Of which salvation the Prophets have enquired, and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you.*

In this and the two following Verses, is contained the last reason of the joy and constancy of Believers under their sufferings, (which might be branched into several arguments to that purpose;) the sum whereof is, That all the Prophets and Apostles; yea, the very Angels of Heaven, are Condisciples and fellow-students of this way of salvation which the Gospel holds forth: and therefore it is worthy to be joyced in, even under sufferings for it. This tenth Verse holds forth how accurate and serious searchers in the nature of this salvation; held forth in the Gospel, the Prophets were, who did foretell of a more clear manifestation of the Doctrine concerning it, and of a more plentiful out-pouring of the grace of the Spirit upon those who live after Christ's incarnation, than had been upon those who lived before; and this may be taken for an argument by itself, more than upon whom that grace is bestowed, that it is

adhere to the Gospel, notwithstanding of sufferings for it. Hence, *Lev. 1.* The way of salvation by Jesus Christ, which is held forth in the New Testament, is a new light broken up since Christs dayes in the flesh; but is the very same in substance, which was known to the Prophets under the Old Testament, and by them made known to the Church then: although the doctrine of salvation be now clearer, and the gifts and graces of the Spirit more plentifully dispensed; since the price of redemption is actually paid, for which God gave out upon trust grace and glory to the Elect before; yet the way of salvation then, and now, is one and the same, for substance, for, of that salvation, which Believers in Christ do by Faith now under the Gospel receive, the Apostle here speaks: *Of which salvation the Prophets have enquired; Col. 2.* So sweet and ravishing a study is that way of salvation through Christ incarnate, that the more knowledg thereof any attain unto, they will still be the more and more inquisitive and diligent after a further measure of it; so that those can know nothing of Christ savingly, who satisfy themselves with any measure of the knowledge of Him, which they have already attained unto: for, even the Prophets, after some insight in that way, partly, by immediate revelation, and partly, by their former diligence, were not taken off from the painfull use of ordinary means; such as Reading, Meditation, Prayer, and careful prying into the meaning of those manifold Types, which held forth that way of salvation through the Messiah to come, and the benefits which the Redeemed have by Him; but did renew and double their diligence, as is imported by the several words here to one purpose: *Of which salvation the Prophets have enquired, and searched diligently.* 3. All that deliver the mind of God to His People, ought to be affectionate and serious students of it themselves, that so they may make the Truths they are to deliver, their own, and have their hearts affected therewith: *Psal. 45. 1.* So may they expect a more blest to take impression, and have effect upon the

3  
 words here, expressing the Prophets  
 in the study of that way of salvation through  
 Christ do import that never did Hunters with greater ear-  
 nement and delight pursue their game, nor those that dig  
 in the earth, where they know some rich treasure is to be  
 found more seriously apply themselves to that exercise, than  
 the Prophets did insist upon this study; *Of which salu-  
 tion the Prophets have enquired, and searched diligently, who  
 prophesied before.* 4. The prime subject both of the Old  
 and New Testament, whereupon all the Ministers of  
 Christ should insist with His People, is the free grace of  
 God, manifested in giving Christ for sinners, in his  
 powerfull drawing of their hearts to close with him, for  
 pardoning grace, and for renewing of their natures by  
 different grace; and so obliging and enabling them to  
 walk worthy of that grace of God: for, the sum of the  
 Prophets work (in which the Apostles concur, as the fol-  
 lowing words do make clear) was, *to prophesie of the grace  
 that should come unto us.* 5. Although this grace was  
 made known, and communicated to them who lived be-  
 fore Christs incarnation, *AB. 10. 43.* Yet it is in a spe-  
 cial manner come unto those who live after, in regard of  
 a clearer manifestation of the Doctrine of Gods Grace,  
*2 Cor. 3. 18.* a more plentiful communication of the gifts  
 and graces of his Spirit, *AB. 2. 16.* and that both of these  
 are extended to some of all Nations, *Col. 3. 11.* In which  
 respects it is here called, *The grace come unto us.*

Ver. 11. *Searching what, or what manner of times the Spirit  
 of Christ which was in them did signifie, when it testified  
 beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that  
 should follow.*

The Apostle clears yet further the Prophets pains in  
 the study of that way of salvation through Christ increas-  
 ing, showing that they were exceeding desirous and dis-  
 tinct to have known the particular time of his coming  
 being desirous to have known more clearly than



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did, how happy those times behoved to be: when the Spirit of Christ (who was even then in an especial way present with them) did mean, when he moved them to describe, so long beforehand, the humiliation, or sufferings of the Messiah; and his exaltation, or the glorious effects that were to follow upon his sufferings, to himself and his redeemed ones: therefore they who lived after his incarnation, ought cheerfully and constantly to adhere to the Gospel, notwithstanding of all their sufferings. Hence *Learn*, 1. It is the way which the Lord usually keeps with the dearest of his Servants, to let out his mind to them by little and little, to make plain some things to them, and keep up other things from them, that he may humble them, quicken them to diligence, and keep up correspondence betwixt himself and them: for, though it was made clear to the Prophets, that Christ was to be incarnate, that much grace should be in his dayes, and more blessed times, than any they had seen: and how ever all of them had some intimation of the time of his incarnation, by *Jacob's* prophesie, *Gen. 49. 10.* and those of them who lived after the Captivity, by *Daniel's* prophesie, *Dan. 9. 24.* Yet they were kept dark concerning the particular time when he should come, and the distinct quality of His times, what form of Worship, and way of administration of Gospel Ordinances there should be then; Therefore are they here set forth, *Search- ing what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ whilst was in them did signifie, &c.* 2. The holy Spirit is a person subsisting, distinct from the Father and the Son, proceeding from both, *Job. 15. 26.* and true God, equal to both, to whom future events are known as if they were actually existing: for, here he is called the Spirit of Christ, and is said to *testifie beforehand the sufferings of Christ.* 3. Jesus Christ the second person of the Trinity hath been before his incarnation actually exercising the Office of Mediatorship, revealing to the Church, in all ages, the way of salvation through his sufferings: for, it was the Spirit of the Son of God that dwelt in the

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 prophets, and made known to them those things con-  
 cerning the Mediator, whereof they did prophesie: *The  
 Spirit of Christ in them testified beforehand.* 4. The chief  
 things which the Spirit of Christ did manifest to the  
 prophets, and wherewith their prime study was taken  
 up, was the sufferings of the Mediator, and the glory  
 that should follow thereupon to him and his redeemed  
 ones; it being the end of all the discoveries of sin, and  
 threatenings of wrath that are in the Law, to point out  
 the necessity of his satisfaction, *Rom. ix. 3.* and the very  
 substance and signification of all the Types and Sacri-  
 fices, to point forth his sufferings, and the glorious ef-  
 fects thereof, *Heb. x. 1.* for, the Apostle compriseth  
 the substance of that which the Spirit of Christ in the Pro-  
 phets did signifie to them, and testifie to the Church by  
 them, in these two, *The sufferings of Christ, and the glory  
 that should follow.* 5. This method was kept with Christ  
 the head, and none of his members should expect to have  
 it changed with them, that he was first to suffer, and  
 then glory was to follow; So that the Jews have no  
 warrant from any thing in the Prophets to expect a  
 Messiah in worldly glory without suffering: for, this is  
 the compend of all that the Prophets spake of the Mess-  
 iah, at the direction of his Spirit in them, *They testified  
 beforehand of the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that  
 should follow.*

*Verf. 12. Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto them-  
 selves, but unto us they did minister the things which are  
 now reported unto you by them that have preached the  
 Gospel unto you, with the holy Ghost sent down from hea-  
 ven, which things the Angels desire to look into.*

That the Apostle may yet further commend the truths  
 of the Gospel, as worthy to be joyced in, and suffered  
 for; and may prove the state of Believers now, to be  
 in some respects more excellent than that of the ancient  
 Prophets, he sheweth, 1. what successe the Pro-  
 phets

had of their pains: although they got not the very thing they did so much desire, which was, not only to know the time of Christs coming in the flesh, but to have lived to see it, as is clear by comparing the former Verse, with *Luk. 10. 24*. Yet the Lord condescended to give them such an answer of their pains as might quiet their hearts, to wit, that they themselves were not to see the temporal accomplishment of their own Prophecies, that was reserved for them who were to live after Christs incarnation: 2. He sheweth, that what the Prophets had foretold, was now much cleared to the Christian Church by the Apostles, who were for that end endued with an extraordinary measure of the holy Spirit, sent down upon them in the day of Pentecost. And, 3. he affirmeth, that this way of salvation through Christ already incarnate, as it is now cleared and administered under the Gospel, is so ravishing a subject, that it takes up the delight and study of the Angels of Heaven to pry into it. Every one of which doth infer that conclusion, which is to be understood as the Apostles scope, That therefore Believers now ought cheerfully to adhere to the truth of the Gospel, what ever they may suffer for so doing. Hence *Learn*, 1. Although the Lord do not alwayes answer the approved pains of his Servants with desired satisfaction, in the particular that they aim at. Yet it is not his way to leave them without such an answer, and fruit of their pains, as shall be more for his honour, their true good, and the good of others also, than if they had received that satisfaction which they so much desired: for, though the Prophets (who were approved in their search after the time of Christs manifestation in the flesh, there being somewhat concerning it revealed, *Gen. 49. 10. Dan. 9. 24.* and there being no-where a discharge of enquiry after that time, as there is after the time of Christs second coming, *Mat. 24. 36. 1 Thess. 5. 1.*) got not their desired satisfaction either by seeing, or knowing particularly the time of Christs incarnation; Yet they were not left without an answer from their Master, but had

had as much of his mind manifested to them, as might  
 minister their minds; *Unto whom it was revealed, that not  
 unto themselves, but unto us they did minister.* 2. It ought  
 to be no discouragement to Christs Servants, that he put  
 them to much pains in his service, for the good of others,  
 withholding from them in the mean time, that measure of  
 satisfaction which he minds to bestow upon others for  
 their pains; it being a sufficient encouragement to any  
 of his Servants or People, to know that he honours them  
 to serve Him acceptably, and that He will make up all  
 their present losse, when He and they meet: for, to the  
 Prophets, who were very laborious, and assiduous, as the  
 Bees, who make sweet Honey for others, and tast but  
 sparingly of it themselves, *It was revealed* (as a sufficient  
 reward of all their pains) *that not unto themselves, but  
 unto us they did minister.* 3. Although the fruit of Christs  
 death hath ever been, since the beginning of the world,  
 forthcoming for the salvation and comfort of the Elec-  
 t. v. 13.8. Yet the advantage of those who live after His  
 incarnation, is, in some respects, greater than theirs who  
 lived before: and that (besides other reasons) because  
 the truth of things revealed then, is now more evident  
 to those who may compare Prophecies with their ac-  
 complishment: for, it is here set down, as some piece of  
 disadvantage to the Prophets, *That, not unto themselves,  
 but unto us they did minister the things.* 4. There is a  
 compleat harmony betwix the Scriptures of the Old  
 and New Testament, what ever seeming contradiction  
 may be apprehended by blind minds to be betwix them:  
 for, the Apostle affirms here, that the Prophets did mi-  
 nister the same things, *which are now reported by them that  
 have preached the Gospel.* 5. To make the Truth lovely to  
 us, and to confirm us in adhering to it under sufferings.  
 It is necessary that the Spirit of Jesus be acknowledged  
 to be with the Messenger, making known to him the  
 Truth, and enabling him to deliver it: although the  
 way of the Spirits presence with, and assistance of, or-  
 dinary Messengers, was different from his way with  
 ordinary

ordinary Ministers; Yet, if it was necessary to be  
known, in order to peoples profiting by the one,  
is much more necessary for their profiting by the other.  
Therefore, to make the doctrine of the Gospel lovely to  
people, and to confirm them in adhering to it, notwithstanding  
sufferings, the Apostle saith, That the same  
things which the Spirit of Christ did signifie to the Pro-  
phets, were reported by them that preached the Gospel to  
them, *With the holy Ghost sent down from heaven.* 6. Although  
the glorified Angels can have no such desires as have any  
painfull unsatisfaction with them, seeing they live in the  
blessed vision and constant fruition of God, *Mat. 18. 10.*  
Yet so excellent and ravishing a myserie is this plot of  
the salvation of lost sinners through Christ incarnate,  
which the Gospel manifests, that they are no less humble  
and accurate students of it, and no less seriously taken  
up with the contemplation of the way of God's recon-  
ciling Himself to sinners, and keeping familiar correspon-  
dence with them, in the man Christ, than if they had  
such desires; as is imported in this word in the Original,  
which hath in it an allusion to the type of the two Ob-  
servations that were upon the Ark, looking down into the  
*Mercy-seat: Which things the Angels desire to look into.*  
7. The more assured of the truths of the Gospel we have  
the more worthy those have been, and the more taken up  
with the study thereof, The more are we obliged to de-  
light and adhere to the same, notwithstanding of all suf-  
ferings: if we slight so great a salvation, or faint in our  
adherence to the Gospel revealing it, for any possible  
sufferings from men, great must our judgment be; many  
witnesses may be brought forth against us in the day of  
the Lord, even this cloud of witnesses, all the Prophets,  
the Apostles, and the Angels of Heaven, who have  
with such harmony and earnestness delighted in this stu-  
dy: for, this is the force of the Apostles principal argu-  
ment in this and the two preceding Verses, which might  
be branched out in many pertinent arguments, to presse  
dearful suffering for the truth of the Gospel, That the  
Pro-

Students were but serious and painful students thereof;  
and as the angels have agreed with them, and these same  
angels also the angels desire to look into.

Ver. 11. Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, as men,  
and hope to the end, for the grace that is to be brought  
unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

In this second part of the Chapter, the Apostle draws  
from his former doctrine, concerning the excellent state  
and rich priviledges of Believers, several exhortations to  
the study of holiness, and presseth the same by several  
motives. The first exhortation is, That they would  
draw up their affections (which are here called the loins  
of the mind, because they follow the motions of the un-  
derstanding) from things below, and unite them to their  
affection on Jesus Christ, and their spiritual and eternal privi-  
ledges spoken of before. The second is, That they would  
study sobriety; which is not only to keep themselves free  
from unlawfull pleasures, but mainly to meddle sparingly  
with lawfull delights. The third is, That they would  
live constantly in the believing expectation of that full  
manifestation of Gods favour, and that perfection in  
holiness, which Christ will bring with him to his own  
at his last appearance: And all these the Apostle doc-  
trines by the consideration of those priviledges of believers  
formerly mentioned: as the first motive, comprehensive  
of many others. Hence Learn, 1. The consideration  
of our spiritual priviledges by Jesus Christ, should stir  
us up to the study of holiness; our diligence in that stu-  
dy being the means of our perseverance, and that which  
clears our right to take the comfort of those priviledges,  
1 Pet. 1-10, 11. So that what ever matter of joy and  
praise Believers have, it should be turned by them into  
incentives to the duties of holiness; and therefore they can  
have no true comfort in their spiritual priviledges, when  
they are, by the apprehension of them, cast over on leeward, and  
not guided to their duty: for, the Apostle (1 Pet. 1-10, 11)

the former part of the Chapter here, in many words  
of joy and praise to Believers, under all their sufferings  
from their election, regeneration, their right to the hea-  
venly inheritance, the certainty of their perseverance  
and other priviledges ) doth teach them here to run  
all these in motives to holiness, while he infers from  
them, these, and the following exhortations, *Where-  
fore gird up the loyns of your mind, be sober, &c.* 2. That  
the Heirs of Glory be possessed in their inheritance,  
they should still think with themselves, that much of  
their way and work, and many difficulties are yet be-  
tween them and the possession thereof, that so they may  
be kept from security and defection, and may be still  
fitting themselves for their journey, and their warfare,  
for, this ancient custom of trussing up long garments,  
whence the word here is borrowed, was especially used  
when they were to journey, or run a race, *2 Kings 4. 39.*  
*18. 46.* or when they were to fight, *1/4. 8. 9. Gird up the*  
*loyns of your mind.* 3. The affections of the Children of  
the Lord are oftentimes low and scattered, partly, while  
they are sinking under sinfull discouragement, *Psal. 42.*  
and partly, while they are divided, and spent upon base  
and sinfull objects, *Psal. 119. 36. 37.* both which, are  
main hinderances of Christians in their course toward  
their heavenly inheritance, are supponed in this exhor-  
tation to be their too ordinary temper; *Gird up the loyns*  
*of your mind.* 4. It should be the great study of those  
who mind their spiritual journey and warfare, to get  
their affections elevated above things earthly, united to-  
gether upon Jesus Christ, (See *Col. 3. 1. Psal. 86. 11.*) and  
taken up with their priviledges by Him, and the duties  
their priviledges calls them to; otherwise they can no  
more make progress in their christian course, than a man  
whose garments are about his feet can run or fight;  
*Wherefore gird up the loyns of your mind.* 5. They that  
would keep up their affections from discouragement, or  
sinking upon things earthly, would labour to have their  
minds upward, the notions and discourses thereof, (as the  
word

here translated, *the mind*, signifies) taken up with  
earthly and heavenly, because the affections do  
flow and depend upon the motions of the mind or un-  
derstanding; for which cause, they are here called the  
*lyns of the mind*: Therefore, the Apostle, having in the  
former part laboured to draw up their minds to the con-  
templation of their spiritual and eternal privileges, he  
here exhorts to draw up and unite upon these their affec-  
tions: *Gird up the lyms of your mind*. 6. They that would  
make progress in their journey toward their heavenly in-  
heritance, must study sobriety, which consists in the con-  
trolling of the rage and excess of carnal passions and per-  
turbations, *Luk. 8. 35.* in the entertaining and expressing  
mean esteem of our selves, and a high esteem of the  
best good in others, *Rom. 12. 3.* in a prudent wariness  
to meddle with, or vent our opinion of things above our  
reach or calling, *1st. 16. 25.* in a spare meddling with all  
sensible delights, though lawful in themselves, the ex-  
cess wherof no lesse indisposeth Christians for spirituall  
performances, than excess of meat or drink doth a man  
for his work or journey, *Luk. 11. 34.* and in a holy and  
strict watchfulness, (as the word in the Original also sig-  
nifies) lest we offend any of these wayes: for, as all the  
rest of the exhortations here, are given to fit Believers  
for their journey toward their fair inheritance formerly  
described, so is this, *Be sober*. 7. Even those for whom  
the heavenly inheritance is made sure, and who have  
obtained to some comfortable measure of assurance, that  
they shall possess it, have need to be stirred up to the stu-  
dy of perseverance in grace and holiness; especially, to  
keep their hearts still up in the confident expectation of  
that blessedness which Faith closeth with in the promise,  
which is the exercise of the grace of hope; and to live so  
as they may never mar that confidence, whether by se-  
curity, or discouragement, knowing that when we lose  
our confidence, we do therewith lose our strength for all  
duties, *1st. 3. 18.* for, even those, for whom the hea-  
venly inheritance is made sure, *1st. 4.* whose perseverance



is also sure, ver. 5. and whose comfort in the hope of both, is very great, ver. 6. are here exhorted *to the end*, 8. That which strengthens the Believers hope of Glory, and keeps it in life and exercise, is believing consideration of that compleat ransom paid by Christ for them that fly to him, his undertaking to cause them persevere, and their own frequent reflecting upon the evidences of his grace in themselves: for, upon these grounds, held forth in the former part of the Chapter, both the Apostle infer this exhortation, *Wherefore give glory, and hope to the end*, 9. The largest manifestation of the favour of God, and the highest degree of holiness, which any attain to in time, is but small, being compared with that measure of both, which Believers have good ground to hope for, when Christ and they shall meet: for, these who had a good measure of both, are here exhorted to look for a further; *Hope to the end, for the grace that is to be brought*, 10. Christ is now under a vail to Believers; his bodily presence being necessarily withdrawn from them, *Job. 16. 7.* and his spiritual glory but seen in a glasse darkly by them, who could not endure a clear sight of either: but at his second coming, the vail shall be taken off, and we shall be able to behold and enjoy Him visibly, conversant with us in our flesh for ever: for, that day, is here called *the revelation of Christ*.

Verf. 14. *As obedient children, stop following your senses according to the former lusts, in your ignorance.*

Here is the second motive to the study of holiness, taken from that sweet privilege of adoption: by the consideration whereof the Apostle excites them, as children, to give themselves up to their fathers obedience, and to keep themselves free of the slavery of their lusts, wherein they had lived before they knew Christ savingly. Hence *Learn*, 1. *Although the best that ever lived have reason to judge themselves unworthy to be in the rank of Ser-*

the Lord, *Gal. 3. 11.* Yet it pleases Him to ad-  
vance the means that receive Christ by Faith; to the  
dignity and priviledges of His Children: for, the Apostle  
designs all Believers, even the meanest, by this stile, *Obedient Children.* 2. Whenever the Children of the Lord  
consider their dignity of sonship, they should be there-  
by strongly moved to the study of obedience to their  
Fathers: which consists in a sincere endeavour after con-  
formity to all his Commands, without exception of any,  
*Psal. 139. 6.* in their kindly submission to all his cor-  
rections, *Heb. 12. 5.* and both these out of love to Him who  
now become their Father in Christ: So shall their son-  
ship be clearly evidenced to them, when they devote  
themselves wholly to their Fathers obedience, and go  
about every part of it, *as obedient children.* 3. The faith  
of this blessed relation to God as our Father in Christ, is  
the frame of Spirit wherewith we should labour to go  
about every duty of new obedience; so will we be con-  
fident that our infirmities shall be pitied, and our weak  
endeavours to obey, accepted, *Psal. 103. 13.* and that our  
wants shall be supplied as shall be necessary, *Mat. 6. 34.*  
For, as these words contain a motive to obedience, taken  
from our adoption; so, they hold forth the right manner  
of Childrens going about every duty, to wit, *As obedient  
Children,* in obedience, and out of love to their Father.  
4. Before that saving change, which the Lord makes up-  
on sinners in Regeneration, they are not only void of the  
living knowledge of God in Christ, but they are also,  
(as the word here doth signifie) incapable, and without  
a mind to know any thing of that sort: for, this is one  
part, and the first part of that misery wherein these who  
are now Children of God, are supposed to have been;  
*in ignorance.* 5. Ignorance is the fountain and root of  
profanity, and of folks serving of their lusts; they who  
know not the terror and sweetness of the Lord, can ne-  
ver be deterred, nor drawn from delighting in the slavery  
of their sins: for, the Apostle makes their ignorance, the  
rule of their profanity, while he exhorts them thus,

oning themselves according to their former lusts, in their ignorance. 6. Not only are the unregenerate in ignorance, but they are voluntary slaves to their lusts; but they are voluntary slaves, giving themselves wholly away to the satisfaction of their sinful desires, and shaping, or moulding (as the word here signifies) their endeavours and undertakings according to the sinfull motions of their corrupt nature, so were those once, who are now Children, not only living in ignorance, and following their lusts, but fashioning themselves according to their lusts. 7. It is necessary for the Children of the Lord to have a clear representation of the wofull case wherein they were before Christ did change them, that they may be kept still humble, and careful to testifie their thankfulness to Him for making a change upon them, in all the duties of obedience, whereby He is honoured: for, while the Apostle is pressing these duties, he giveth this clear representation of that wofull condition wherein they had been formerly, *fashioning themselves according to their former lusts, in their ignorance.* 8. Although there be no hazard, that any of the Regenerate shall ever lose their new nature, which is the seed of God abiding in them, 1. *Joh. 3. 9.* Yet, in regard their former lusts are but in part subdued, and therefore old love to them is soon kindled, there is a great hazard that they should become, for their present disposition and carriage, very like unto what they were before they got a new nature: the consideration whereof, should stir them up to diligence and progress in the study of mortification: for, this hazard is insinuated by the Apostle, while he presseth upon the Regenerate, that they should not *fashion themselves according to their former lusts, in their ignorance.* 9. Diligence in new obedience, flowing from the faith and sense of our spiritual priviledges, especially of our adoption, is that which keeps the Children of the Lord from the wonted slavery of their lusts: for, these words may be taken, as a remedy against the prevailing of them; *As obedient Children, not fashioning your selves according to the former lusts, in your ignorance.* Veri,

15. *But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation ;*  
16. *Because it is written, Be ye holy, for I am holy.*

The Apostle, having in the former Verse pressed the duty of holiness negatively, from that great privilege of adoption, doth here presse the same positively, by two further motives : The one is, That since the Lord hath purchased to call them from an estate of sin and wrath, to a state of holiness and happiness, they ought therefore to walk answerably to their holy-calling. The other is, That there should be a conformity between the Holy Lord, and all His Children, and therefore holiness, which is His property, ought to be studied by them, and manifested in all the particular passages of their christian course : And this last argument, the Apostle confirms from the Scripture, whereof though there be no particular place here cited, yet the substance of the words are to be found in several places, *Lev. 11. 44. 19. 2. and 20. 7. Acts. 5. 17.* Hence *Learn, 1.* They that would prove themselves to be truly holy, and so to be the Children of the Lord, must not satisfy themselves with the negative part of holiness, which consists in abstinence from what is unsuitable to the relation of Children ; but they must also labour for the positive part of it, which consists in some measure of conformity to their heavenly Father in His holiness : for after the Apostle hath prest that study negatively, that they should not conform themselves to their former lusts, in their ignorance, he urgeth here the positive part thereof, *But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy.* 2. They who have found the Lord powerfully calling them, from that estate of sin and wrath, wherein they are naturally, to a blessed condition of grace and happiness, should think themselves thereby strongly obliged to the study of holiness, whereby Christians in heart and practise, are alienated and drawn from things earthly, and are set apart for the use

of their Lord, and so do evidence to themselves their  
Qual calling, 2 *Pm.* 1. 10. for, as a motive to the fruit  
of holiness, the Apostle here suggests to Believers the  
calling; *But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy.*  
3. Although it be altogether impossible for any Man or  
Angel to be conform in holiness unto God, who is es-  
sentially immutable, and infinitely holy, 1 *San.* 2. 2. Yet  
there is no absolute unerring pattern, lower than the holy  
One, to be set before the eyes of the Children of the Lord,  
who ought not to make the holiest on earth a sufficient  
come to them; but, being still ashamed of their defect  
in holiness, and unsatisfied with their present measure  
thereof, must still be aiming at a nearer conformity with  
Christ the Lord, and daily making use of Him, who is  
their sanctification, 1 *Cor.* 1. 30. to cover their defects,  
and to sanctifie them more fully: for, this is the example  
and pattern of that holiness to which all the called Chil-  
dren of God should aspire; *As he who hath called you is  
holy, so be ye holy.* 4. Although internal holiness be  
mainly lovely to the Lord, *Psal.* 51. 6. and the external,  
without it, be loathsome to Him, *Mat.* 23. 27. Yet none  
should satisfy themselves with that holiness, which they  
imagine to have within, but should labour to manifest  
holiness in their external conversation, by shewing them-  
selves, in their visible actions, mindful and respective of  
all the Commands of God, *Lev.* 20. 7, 8. *Psal.* 119. 6.  
whereby they glorifie Him before others, and evidence  
themselves to have true holiness, *Jab.* 15. 8. for, this  
conformity to our Father in holiness, must be manifested  
in the conversation. 5. There is no part of a Christian  
conversation, which ought not to favour of holiness and  
true piety; not only his religious, but even his common  
and civil actions, ought to be done in the Lord, and for  
his glory, 1 *Cor.* 10. 31. And under all the various dis-  
pensations of God with him, he ought still to prove him-  
self a hater of sin, and a lover of what the Lord ap-  
proves, which is the thing here pressed, *to be holy in all  
manner of conversation.* 6. The strictest of moral pre-  
cept

in the Old Testament, are binding to Believers un-  
der the New; the substance of all of them, which is,  
that reasonable creatures should love their Maker and  
their fellow-creatures; being of perpetual equity, ob-  
liging both Angels and Men; and nothing being requir-  
ed of us, in any of them, to be done by vertue of our  
own strength, or that we may be justified thereby, but  
only what the Regenerate are enabled to aim at, and to  
obtain to such a measure of, as through Christ shall be  
accepted, as if they had attained to what is required, Col.  
3. 10. for, here one of the strictest of moral precepts that  
are in the Old Testament, is pressed upon Believers; *Who  
the Lord hath called you is holy, so be ye holy; for it is written,  
Be ye holy, for I am holy.* 7. The Ministers of Jesus  
Christ, ought to have His Word so richly dwelling in  
them, that they may be able to confirm what they de-  
liver to the Lords People, from clear and expresse testi-  
monies thereof, especially when they presse such Truths  
as natural hearts are most averse from: for, even this  
extraordinary Minister, the Apostle, whom people had  
little reason to suspect than any ordinary Minister, while  
he presseth this high pitch of holinesse, to wit, the study  
of conformity to the Holy One, he thus confirms his  
doctrine by Scripture, *Because it is written, Be ye holy, for  
I am holy.* 8. Although it be the duty of Ministers, some-  
times to point out to people the particular place of Scrip-  
ture, whereby they do confirm their doctrine, *Mat. 13.  
35.* yet ought the Lords People to be so well acquainted  
with the written Word, that upon the hearing of any  
sentence of it, they may acknowledge it to be the Lords  
word, that so there may be no necessity for Ministers to  
spend time, and burthen peoples memories with multi-  
plied citations for every Truth they deliver; especially  
where the words of Scripture are remarkable, and fre-  
quently to be found: for, so the Apostle citing this re-  
markable Scripture, which is frequently to be found in  
the Old Testament, doth not name any particular place,  
but only saith, *It is written, Be ye holy, for I am holy.*

Verſ. 17. *And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth, according to every mans work, passe the time of your sojourning here in fear.*

Follows the fifth and sixth motives to the study of holiness: The one is, That even those who take the Lord for their Father, and themselves for his Children, will find Him an exact and impartial Judge of them, and of their actions. The other is, That His Children are but strangers and sojourners; and so living in the midst of many hazards and temptations; both which should move them to study holiness, whereof this is a special part, to carry along in their hearts, through their pilgrimage, some fear of offending their heavenly Father, who is to be their Judge. Hence *Learn*, 1. The more acquaintance with the Lord, and confidence of His fatherly affection Christians attain unto, the more are they obliged to the study of holiness; and particularly, to walk in fear of offending Him, who will be sanctified in all that draw nigh unto Him, *Lev. 10. 3.* and will have every one that names Him their own God and Father, to depart from iniquity, *2 Tim. 2. 19.* for, so does the Apostle reason here; *If ye call on the Father, (or, if ye name Him Father) passe the time of your sojourning in fear.* 2. As those who may call God their Father, will not want their own pressing necessities, which will put them to cry to Him, as men do in greatest extremities (as the word here signifies;) So under the greatest of these, they should still maintain the faith of that standing relation betwixt Him and them, and deal with Him in earnestness, and confidence of His help, as with a Father, as is imported in this, *If ye call on the Father.* 3. While we take up the Lord under this sweet relation of a Father to us in Christ, which may beget in our hearts familiarity with Him, and confidence of obtaining necessary help from Him, we ought also to cherish other considerations of Him, and look upon Him as standing

other relations to us, especially, that of a Judge, that our hearts may be kept in awe, and fear of offending Him, and our homeliness may not mar our reverence: for, the Apostle holdeth forth both these relations betwixt the Lord and his Children, to be joyntly considered by them; *If ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth.* 4. The Lord is both an impartial Judge, who cannot be byassed either with the expectation of any benefit, or terrified by the apprehension of any hazard from creatures, *Job 35. 7, 8.* and likewise so exact in judging, that neither person, nor action, can escape his judgment: for, *without respect of persons he judgeth according to every mans work,* saith the Apostle. 5. There will be no exercise of mercy (as it is taken for the pardoning of sin not formerly pardoned) at the last reckoning: those that are in Christ, shall be judged according to His obedience and works, which will be reckoned theirs, *Phillip. 3. 9.* and their good works, done in His strength, only remembered, *Rev. 14. 13.* As for those who never fled to Him, they shall be judged according to the strictest rigor of the Law of works, *Rom. 2. 6, 8, 9.* for, the Apostle looks mainly to the last judgment, while he saith, *He judgeth every man according to his works.* 6. The Children of the Lord, are pilgrims and strangers in this world, and should esteem themselves to be such, *Heb. 11. 13,* and therefore should live in fear of snares and hazards, as the Apostle here presseth, never imitating the fashions of this world, *Rom. 12. 2.* satisfying themselves with such sober entertainment, as Gods providence brings to their hand upon their journey, *Heb. 13. 5.* and still hastning toward their Country, *Luk. 12. 35.* for, so much doth the Apostle import, while he thus expresseth our condition here, *The time of our sojourning.* 7. Although they that are fled to Christ, ought never to fear any hazard from flesh, which may discourage them in the way of their duty, *Mat. 10. 28.* nor yet eternal wrath, further than to stir them up to renew their flight to Him, and to engage them to His service, who hath delivered



them from it, *Luk. 1. 74. Rom. 8. 1.* Yet such a fear  
offending their Father, (flowing from the consideration  
of His excellency, *Jer. 10. 6, 7.* and of His goodness, *Hos.*  
*2. 5.* as makes them watchfull against temptations, con-  
sidering their own weakness, *2 Cor. 10. 12.* and quickens  
them to their duty, *Heb. 12. 28.*) should be carried along  
in their hearts thorow their whole time, and cherished  
by the consideration of those relations they have to God  
as a Father, and a Judge; *If ye call on the Father, who*  
*without respect of persons judgeth, &c. passe the time of your*  
*sojourning here in fear,*

- Verf. 18.** Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed  
with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain  
conversation received by tradition from your fathers;  
**19.** But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb with-  
out blemish and without spot.

Here is the seventh motive to the study of holiness, tak-  
ken from that great privilege of our Redemption, which  
is here described, 1. From the price thereof; and thus  
the Apostle expresseth negatively, that it was not so bare  
as the best of corruptible things; such as have sometimes  
ransomed the greatest of men from outward bondage,  
*2 Kings 18. 14, 15.* and positively, that it was the meri-  
torious blood of the innocent Son of God, who was ty-  
pified by the Paschal Lamb, which behoved to be with-  
out blemish, *Exod. 12. 5.* 2. This work of Redemption,  
is described from the effect of it toward the Christian  
Church, and Believers in it, to wit, That they were  
therby delivered from that legal dispensation which was  
altogether unprofitable, as the observance thereof had  
been prest upon them by many of their fathers; and from  
every other sinful course, wherein they had been hardened  
by their fathers example and precepts: So the sum of  
this argument is, that since they themselves did take it for  
granted, that they were bought with so excellent a price,  
from so woful a condition, they ought therefore to live

to the honour of their Redeemer in the study of holiness.  
Hence Learn, 1. All that are redeemed by Jesus Christ,  
were once slaves, and in bondage to Satan, *2 Tim. 2. 26.*  
to their own lusts, *Tit. 3. 3.* and so under subjection to the  
wrath of God, *Eph. 2. 3.* for, *Redemption* suppones captivi-  
ty and bondage. 2. There could be no freedom of sinners  
from this bondage, but by the paying of a price to of-  
fended Justice: Gods mercy could not be bestowed up-  
on any sinners (the Covenant of works being once made)  
but with the safety and satisfaction of His Justice, *Rom.*  
*3. 25, 26.* which could not have been, except the price  
had been paid which Justice did require: for, *Redemption*  
suppones also the paying of a price. 3. Believers in  
Jesus Christ, are by Him brought to a state of liberty  
and freedom, not from their obedience to His holy Law,  
*Lev. 1. 74.* but from any right Satan had over them, be-  
fore their believing in Him, *Col. 2. 15.* from the curse of  
the Law, *Gal. 3. 13.* and from the dominion and slavery  
of sin, *Tit. 2. 14.* And the whole Church under the  
New Testament, is by Him delivered from the yoke of  
Mosaical Ceremonies, *Gal. 5. 1.* for, this privilege of  
*Redemption*, imports a state of freedom and liberty.  
4. Not the most excellent of corruptible things, which  
are most valued among men, could be sufficient to be the  
price of Redemption for sinners, one soul being of more  
worth than all things of that sort, *Psal. 49. 7, 8.* There-  
fore the Apostle Expresseth the price of Redemption ne-  
gatively; *Not with corruptible things, as silver and gold.*  
5. It is not impossible for sinners to know themselves to  
be of the number of them that are redeemed by Jesus  
Christ, there being clear marks of such given in Scrip-  
ture, *Tit. 2. 84.* and the Spirit promised that they may  
know the things that are freely bestowed upon them,  
*1 Cor. 2. 12.* for, the Apostle suppones this, while he  
saith, *Forasmuch as ye know that ye were redeemed.* 6. The  
more confident Christians be that they are of the num-  
ber of the redeemed Ones by Christ, the more should  
they be moved to study holiness for the honour of their

Redeemer, considering that the study thereof is the very end of their Redemption, *Luk. 1. 74.* and the evidence thereof, both to themselves and to others, *1sa. 62. 12.* for this is brought in here by the Apostle, as an argument to the study of holiness, and particularly, to passe the time of our sojourning here in fear; *Forasmuch as ye know that ye were redeemed, &c.* 7. The ordinary way how the Redeemed of the Lord attain to the knowledge of their Redemption, is, by discerning in themselves a real and gracious change made upon their heart and life by vertue of Christs death: for, the Apostle suppones, that those who knew themselves to be redeemed, behoved also to know that they were liberated from their *vain conversation*. 8. While men are not changed in their heart and life, by the application of the merit of that price which Christ paid, all that they can do, whether in religious performances, or in their ordinary practises, is altogether vain, and such as can bring no true comfort or profit to themselves, or honour to Jesus Christ: for, so the Apostle designs the way wherein the Redeemed walked before their Regeneration, calling it, *a vain conversation*: which may comprehend, both their religious, and common performances. 9. Although there be both a pronenes in fathers, to transmit to their children that wickedness wherein their fathers have rooted and hardened them; and in children, to receive, and transmit the same to their of-spring again; Yet neither is the example, nor precepts of fathers, a sufficient warrant to their posterity, for any practise whatsoever: for, the Apostle imports, that those to whom he writes, had received from their fathers, what they had received from theirs before, although it was vain; and reckons it a great advantage, that they were now delivered from that *vain conversation*, although it was received by tradition from their fathers. 10. No lesse could be a sufficient ransom for lost sinners, than the blood of Jesus Christ; the favours to be purchased for them, to make them eternally blessed, being of infinite value, and the sentence of everlasting death being past upon

upon all *Adams* posterity, either all behoved to die, or  
one, worth all the rest; and such an one had never been  
found, if God had not given His Son to be a man; that  
so man might be redeemed *with the precious blood of Christ*.

11. The blood of Jesus Christ, considering the excellen-  
cy of His person, the greatness and freedom of His love;  
in shedding for such as we are, and the worth of the fa-  
vours merited by it to Believers, such as the favour of  
God and eternal life, ought to be in high esteem with all  
the Redeemed: for, to work this in their hearts, the  
Apostle thus commends it, *The precious blood of Christ*.

12. It behoved Him who was to be our Redeemer, to  
be altogether free of the defilement of sin, for which He  
was to satisfy in the behalf of others; as being the truth  
and signification of the Paschal Lamb, to which the  
Apostle here relates; and other spotless Sacrificers, which  
typified Him, under the Law, that so as man He might  
be compleatly lovely and acceptable to God, and be a  
perfect pattern of holiness to all His Redeemed Ones.  
Therefore, the Apostle thus commends Him, *As a Lamb  
without blemish, and without spot*.

Verf. 20. *Who verily was fore-ordained before the foundation  
of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you.*

To the end there may be yet a higher esteem of the  
Redeemer, wrought in the hearts of the Redeemed, and  
that they may be the more engaged to the study of ho-  
liness, that so He may be honoured by them, the Apostle  
goes on to describe Him further. 1. That He was from  
eternity, appointed by the Father, to be the Saviour of  
sinners. And, 2. That He was now more clearly ma-  
nifested after His incarnation, than He had been before;  
both which, make up the eight motive to the study of  
holiness, that being Christ had been from eternity de-  
signed Mediatour, and now more clearly than ever ma-  
nifested, with a special respect to the good of that lost  
sheep of the house of Israel, to whom the Apostle writes

Therefore they were bound to live to His honour in the study of holiness. Hence *Learn*, 1. When ever we attain to any serious thoughts of that great business of our Redemption by Christ incarnate and crucified, we should not suffer our hearts to be soon diverted from them, but should labour to dwell upon them, and to search out more and more considerations of that sweet subject; every one of them being worthy to take up our affections, and to engage us to the study of holiness: for, the Apostle, in the former words having fallen upon the mentioning of our Redemption, as a motive to holiness, he doth in this, and the following Verse, run out in expressing the thoughts he had of the Lords everlasting purpose about that work, of the glory that Christ now possesses in our nature, and of the Father's intention in exalting Him, *who verily was fore-ordained before the foundation of the world*. 2. Our Mediatour was from all eternity designed unto the office of Mediatourship, in that everlasting Covenant of Redemption, wherein the Father gave the Elect to His Son, *Psal. 2. 8.* and appointed Him to assume humane nature, therein to suffer for their Redemption, *Heb. 10. 5.* and Christ accordingly undertook to satisfy His will, *Psal. 40. 7, 8.* So that we who have Christ offered to us in the Gospel, are invited to feed upon those dainties, that were prepared for us from all eternity; And who are we that the thoughts of God should have been so long since taken up about us, while He appointed His own Son for us, *who verily was fore-ordained before the foundation of the world*? 3. Although Christ was made known immediately after the Fall, *Gen. 3. 15.* and ever since hath been sufficiently manifested for the salvation of the Elect in all Ages, *Act. 10. 42.* Yet there was a more clear manifestation of Him, reserved for the time after His incarnation, the more to brighten the esteem of that great myserie of His incarnation, in the hearts of all His People; Therefore the Apostle speaks of Him here, as more clearly held forth to the Church than before; *But now made manifest to the Church* last

*the times for you.* 4. The more clearly Christ be held forth in any time, the more strongly are they that live in that time, and have that clearness, obliged to live to His honour in the study of holiness, considering that the more unanswerable mens walking be to the light they have; the greater will their condemnation be, *Job. 3. 19.* and *15. 22.* they that live since the incarnation of Christ, and the clearer out-breaking of the light of the Gospel which reveals Him, should think the Lord hath had a special respect to them, and hath in a peculiar manner designed Christ for them, and manifested Him to them, that they may be more eminent in holiness and thankfulness to Him: for, to this end the Apostle speaks thus of Christ: *Manifested in these last times for you.* 5. Although experience hath proven that there was a considerable part of time to be after Christs incarnation, yet all that is but the last time, in regard it is to be much shorter than the time that was before: and because, after that time, though there be a continual increase of knowledge and grace to be expected, *Ezek. 47. 1. &c.* Yet there is no more change of that way of Worship and Ordinances, which Christ setled before He left the world, *Mat. 28. 18, 19, 20.* for which cause, among others, the times after Christs incarnation, are here called, *The last times.*

*Verf. 21. Who by him do believe in God that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory, that your faith and hope might be in God.*

Having commended Christ the Redeemer, he describeth those for whose sakes He was appointed and manifested, to wit, those who do by Faith flee to God through Him: and that they may be the more encouraged so to do, he leads them to consider the Father as one fully satisfied with the ransom paid for sinners by Jesus Christ, seeing after the payment of it He hath exalted and glorified Him, for this very end. That the Faith of sinners

may safely and comfortably rest upon God, as now  
 pacified toward all that flee to Him thorow Christ. Which  
 purpose doth contain the ninth argument to the study of  
 holiness; That since the Father hath exalted, and glori-  
 fied our Cautitioner in our nature, for this very end, that  
 we may confidently draw near to Him, as to our own  
 reconciled God, we ought therefore to live to the honour  
 of the Father and the Son in the study of holiness. Hence  
*Learn, 1.* When ever the Ministers of Christ hold forth  
 the ransom paid by Christ for sinners, and the benefits  
 purchased thereby to them, they ought also to design  
 and describe the persons, who may appropriate the same  
 to themselves: and ought not to propose that which is  
 peculiar to some, (*Job. 10. 15.*) as common to all; So  
 shall the few that have right to apply the benefits of His  
 Redemption, be the more sure and comforted, and others  
 shall not be disappointed: for, so doth the Apostle here,  
 while, having described Christ the Redeemer, and set  
 forth some of the benefits of His Redemption, he comes  
 next to describe what manner of persons they are, who  
 may comfort themselves in that Redemption purchased  
 by Him; even those, *who by Him do believe in God.* 2. Al-  
 though our Faith may close with any one of the blessed  
 Persons of the Trinity, providing we do not divide in  
 our thoughts the Divine Essence, which is One in all the  
 Three, 1 *Job. 5. 7.* Yet God the Father, (considered as  
 the fountain of the Deity, to whom we come thorow  
 the Second Person, clothed with our flesh, being helped  
 by the holy Spirit, the Third Person) is that full and  
 most satisfying object, with which saving Faith closeth,  
 when it acts most distinctly: for, such an object is here  
 proposed, with which the Faith of the Redeemed doth  
 close, to wit, the whole Godhead in the Father appre-  
 hended as ours, by the Son incarnate, thorow the help  
 of the Spirit, as the next verse, compared with this, makes  
 clear. 3. There is no closing with God as ours, but by  
 the Mediatour Christ, in whom God tryts with sin-  
 ners, who hath merited Gods favour to them, the power

to believe the same; and actually works that Faith in them, *Who by Him do believe in God.* 4. Although Jesus Christ, being the same God, equal with the Father, *Philip. 2. 6.* did by His own proper vertue, raise Himself from the dead, *Job. 2. 19.* and *10. 18.* Yet to assure us of the Fathers full satisfaction with the price paid by our Cautioner, and because the power of all the Three Persons is one, and the actions ascribed to any of them, in reference to the creatures, are common to all, His raising from the dead, and exaltation, is here. (as frequently elsewhere in Scripture, *Eph. 1. 20. Philip. 2. 9.*) attributed to the Father, *who raised Him from the dead, and gave Him glory.* 5. Gods justice is fully satisfied in the behalf of all that flee to Him through Jesus Christ, because their Cautioner is liberate; and glory is insured to all such, their Head being already possessed in it: for, in testimony that His satisfaction for the Elect is accepted, *God hath raised Him from the dead, and, as a sure pledge that His Members shall be glorified, He hath given Him glory, that your faith and hope might be in God.*

*Verf. 22. Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the Truth through the Spirit, unto unfeigned love of the Brethren: see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently.*

The tenth motive to presse upon Believers the study of Holiness, is taken from the former progress they had made therein: whence the Apostle infers an exhortation to that particular duty of holiness, *to wit. love to the Saints.* The sum of both is, That since by the power of Christs Spirit enabling them to obey the Gospel, they had gotten their heart-corruptions so far purged out, as to attain unto some sincere affection unto the rest of the Lords People; Therefore they should study to grow in grace, particularly, in love to the Saints; and that they should labour to have such love to them, as floweth from a sincere desire of their good; and by the effects of a



doth prove it self to be such. Hence *Learn*, 1. The  
fairer beginnings, and further progress any have already  
made in the way of holiness, they should find themselves  
the more strongly obliged to hold on in that way, lest  
they lose the fruit of their former pains, 2 *Job*. 8. and  
prove more dishonourable to God, and offensive to  
others, than if they had never entered, or made such pro-  
gress in that way, 2 *Pet*. 2. 21. for the Apostle here makes  
former progress in holiness, a motive to further progress  
therein: *Seeing you have purified your souls, &c. see that ye  
love, &c.* 2. As all those, whom the Lord hath sa-  
vingly enlightened and renewed, will discern in their  
souls many filthy and unclean roots, besides any that  
have broken out; so their great work should be, to have  
their souls purged from those, knowing that from the  
polluted fountain of the heart flows all the pollution of  
the life, *Mat*. 15. 19. and that except the heart be in  
some measure cleansed, all the purity of the outside is  
loathsome to God, *Mat*. 23. 27. for the Apostle thus de-  
scribeth the Regenerate, that they *have purified their souls*.  
3. Although it be the alone work of God, as the princi-  
pal efficient cause, to cleanse and purifie the souls of His  
People, both from the guilt and dominion of sin, *Ezek*.  
36. 25. Yet His People, who are meetly passive in the  
first infusion of grace, *Eph*. 2. 1. are thereafter made by  
Him active instruments in the carrying on of that work  
of mortification; by employing Christs vertue for sub-  
duing, and fighting in His strength against their corrup-  
tions; as is imported in this, *Ye have purified your souls*.  
4. The Lords mean of purging the souls of His People  
from the love and power of sin, which is naturally in  
them, is their obedience to His Truth: which consists,  
not only in their aiming at conformity to those precepts,  
which enjoin purity and holiness, such as that is, *ver*.  
25. but principally, in their embracing by Faith, and  
use-making of the promises of the new Covenant, where-  
in the Lord undertakes to work this purity, *Ezek*. 36. 25,  
26, 27. This is the chief part of that obedience to the  
Truth

Truth, which purifieth souls: for, saith the Apostle, *Ye have purified your souls, in obeying the Truth.* 5. This obedience to the Truth, which purifieth the souls of Believers, cannot be attained unto, by our own naturall strength, or the use of the fittest means of grace, without the special working of the Spirit of Jesus, who cleareth to sinners the nature of that purity, which is pleasing to God, and powerfully worketh the same in them: for, so the Apostle affirms of those Believers, that they had purified their souls in obeying the Truth, *through the Spirit.* 6. One special part of this work of purging the souls of Believers, consists in the subduing of those filthy roots, which are in their hearts, contrary to that grace of love to the rest of the Lords People, such as pride, self-love, and the like: for, this is here made their aim, in purifying their souls, that they might attain unto *unfeigned love of the Brethren*: importing, that their pains was much bent to purge out those evils, which are contrary to that grace. 7. Believers have need to be seriously pressed to exercise and grow in these graces and duties: whereinof they have already attained to some approved measure: for, upon those who had already purified their souls, as to unfeigned love of the Brethren, the Apostle presseth this, *See that ye love one another.* 8. It is not every sort of love to the Saints of God that evidenceth mortification, and the indwelling of Christs Spirit; but such only, as is without dissimulation or hypocrisie, which is *unfeigned love*, such as flows from holy principles, to wit, respect to the Command of Christ, and not from respect to our own credit or advantage only; from desire of the true good of others, and not from love to our selves, which is *Love out of a pure heart*; and such as breaks forth in real proofs, and is continued toward others, notwithstanding of provocations from them; which is, *To love one another fervently.*

Yas

**Verf. 23.** *Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God which liveth and abideth for ever.*

The eleventh motive, whereby the Apostle presseth upon Believers the study of holiness, (especially, that branch of it, which he was last upon, to wit, Love to the Saints) is taken from the excellency of their spiritual original: the sum whereof is, That since they had a new life and nature in their regeneration, wrought in them, not by so fading a cause or principle as that which is the instrument of producing their natural substance, but by the Word of God, which, in the effects it hath upon the Regenerate, liveth and abideth for ever; Therefore the excellency of their new nature, and permanency of their spiritual estate, should move them to walk suitably unto it; and particularly, to live in love with the rest of their Fathers Children. Hence *Learn*, 1. Every true Believer in Jesus Christ, is in some measure acquainted with a new and second birth; which is that work of God with sinners, whereby there is a new spiritual life and nature communicated to them, *Eph. 2. 1.* and they are brought through some pangs and straits, arising from the sight of their own sinfulness, and fear of deserved wrath, *48. 2. 37.* out of their darkness and bondage, (which is natural to them, and is resembled by the state of the child before the birth) into a state of light, and knowledge of God in Christ, *2 Cor. 4. 6.* and freedom from the slavery of sin; and subjection to wrath, *Rom. 8. 3.* and whereby also they are made, in some measure, to resemble their heavenly Father, and are inclined to obey Him, and to love Him, and all His Children, *1 Joh. 5. 1.* for, this the Apostle makes a description of true Believers, that they are *born again*. 2. Our life and nature, that we have by virtue of this second birth, or regeneration, is far more excellent than what we have by the first; our natural estate is subject to

cor-

corruption, and will be shortly dissolved; but our spiritual estate can never fade: for, though all have immortal souls that are not corruptible, yet the natural life and state of all shall be dissolved, and the eternal being of those who are unacquainted with Regeneration, and a second birth, will be but an eternal corruption, or perishing, which should make all long to be acquainted with Regeneration: for, to lead us to esteem the one above the other, the Apostle commends the one above the other from the difference of their seeds; *Not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible.* 3. Although the Word, separated from the working of the Spirit, can do nothing to the regenerating of a sinner, *Jeb. 3. 5.* yet the Word is the ordinary instrument of the Spirit, who makes use of all the principal parts of it in that work; of the Law, to put the sinner in some straits of the second birth, through fear of deserved wrath; and of the Gospel, to revive the soul, and liberate it from those fears; and of the Law again, to direct the Regenerate how to walk suitably to their estate: for, the Apostle explains what that incorruptible seed is, of which we are born again, to wit, *The Word of God.* 4. Although there be no life, either formally, or by way of efficiency, in the letters or sound of the words of Scripture; and though that Word passeth with the speaking, as any other words do; yet in regard of the effects, which through the operation of the Spirit it hath upon sinners, such as fear, and terror upon the believing of the threatnings, *Act. 2. 37.* comfort under crosses, and quickning for duties upon the believing of the promises, *Psal. 119. 50.* It is, as the Apostle here calleth it, *A Word that liveth*; and in regard of the execution of eternal wrath upon them that reject it, and of the performance of those everlasting blessings, which are promised in it, to them that receive and obey it, it is *a Word that abideth for ever.* 5. They who do profess, and esteem themselves to be of the number of those who are born again, should, by the consideration of their second birth, be strongly moved to the sta-

dy of holiness, for the honour of their Father; and especially, to live in love with the rest of their Fathers Children: for, the Apostle brings this as a further argument to the study of holiness, (and particularly to the study of that branch of it, which he had pressed in the former words, concerning mutual love amongst Professours) that they were *born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, &c.*

Verf. 24. *For all flesh is grasse, and all the glory of man, as the power of grasse: the grasse withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away:*

25. *But the Word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the Word which by the Gospel is preached unto you.*

The last motive, whereby the Apostle presseth upon Believers the study of holiness, and constancy under sufferings, is taken from a further commendation of the excellency of their spiritual estate, which the Apostle sets out by comparing the same with the best estate of men naturally considered, with all their ornaments, wherein they use to glory, which is (according to the Scripture, *Isa. 40. 6.*) like unto withering grasse, and fading flowers. In the application of which comparison, the Apostle insists upon his former commendation of the Word (which is the seed, whereby Believers are begotten) from the perpetuity of it, to wit, in the effects thereof upon them, which might easily lead them to judge of their state accordingly; and applies this commendation of the Word to that Doctrine, which was preached to them by himself, or others of the Lords Servants. All which doth strongly presse his scope, that therefore they should live holily, and suffer cheerfully, as became those who were in so excellent an estate. Hence Learn, 1. Although it be much in the thoughts and desires of natural men, that they might have a perpetual enjoyment of this life, and the comforts of it, *Psal. 49. 11.* Yet themselves, and all that they can glory in, is frail and fading, like the grasse,

grasse, and flowers of the grasse; whereupon they should  
 read their frailty and mortality, and so be stirred up to  
 provide for a better life, and a more enduring substance  
 than what they have here: for, *all flesh is as grasse, and all  
 the glory of man as the flower of grasse.* 2. Though every  
 common gift of God wherein men use to glory, whether  
 riches, wisdom, strength, beauty, or the like, be fading  
 as the grasse and flowers thereof; Yet, because mens cre-  
 dit, or glory before the world, is that wherein they use to  
 glory most; and of the perpetuating whereof, they are  
 most strongly desirous, *Psal. 49. 11.* The Lord hath put  
 a special fadingness and vanity upon that; and will have  
 it as easily blasted as any other thing wherein men glo-  
 ry: for, though *the glory of man*, here spoken of, may be  
 taken largely, as comprehending every thing for which  
 men lift up themselves, and wherein they use to glory,  
 as the word is used, *Mat. 4. 8.* Yet it seems especially to  
 point out that honour and credit, which men affect to  
 have before the world; in which signification it is used,  
*1 Theff. 2. 6.* the property whereof, the Lord pronoun-  
 ceth to be fadingness or withering; *And all the glory of  
 man, as the flower of grasse.* 3. Though this be a plain  
 Truth, taught by daily experience, and commonly ac-  
 knowledged, that our natural estate with all the orna-  
 ments thereof, is frail and fading; Yet, it is not easie to  
 make this Truth take due impression upon the hearts of  
 men, who are naturally unwilling to admit thoughts of  
 a change, *Amos 6. 2.* Therefore the Spirit of God bears  
 it in upon mens minds, under the same similitude, in  
 very many places of Scripture, *Job 14. 2. Psal. 103. 15.*  
*Isa. 40. 6. Jam. 1. 10.* and here by many expressions; *All  
 flesh is grasse, and all the glory of man as the flower of grasse:  
 the grasse withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away.*  
 4. The believing consideration of this frailty and fading-  
 ness of mens natural estate and earthly contentments,  
 should heighten in their hearts the esteem of that spiri-  
 tual and better estate, whereunto by receiving the Go-  
 spel they may be advanced; and should be to them a  
 powerful

powerful motive to the study of holiness, which will abide when other things do fade, 1 *Job*. 3. 9. and especially, to the study of mutual love among themselves, (those earthly things for which usually they contend, *Gen*. 13. 8. and particularly their credit, the love whereof, is often the greatest occasion of strife among them, *Luk*. 22. 24. being so fading and uncertain;) for, as a commendation of the state of the Regenerate, or motive to the study of holiness, and particularly of brotherly love, is this here brought in, *All flesh is grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass: the grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: But the Word of the Lord endureth for ever.* 5. What ever can be spoken to the commendation of the *Word*, serves also for the commendation of them who have by faith received it, and are regenerated by it: That which is the seed and principle of their spiritual being, their charter, and right to all their priviledges and inheritance, being excellent and worthy, their state must needs be such likewise: for, it is clear the Apostles purpose here, is, to commend the state of the Regenerate, as far more excellent than the best natural state; and this he esteems to be sufficiently done, by commending the *Word*, from the perpetuity of it, in opposition to the frail state of men naturally considered, *All flesh is grass, &c. But the Word of the Lord endureth for ever.* 6. They who have received a new spiritual life, and so are entered in a new state, by their receiving of the *Word*, ought to fix in their hearts, by frequent meditations, the perpetuity of that *Word*, in the accomplishment of the good things promised therein, which shall endure to them for all eternity, that so they may the better see, and be the more affected with their own blessedness: for, the Apostle, having commended the *Word* from this property of it before, repeats it here again, *The Word of the Lord endureth for ever.* 7. As Christs own worth and excellency, is best seen when He is compared with other things, which may seem to have worth in them, *Gal*. 2. 3. So the worth of our spiritual estate, is best seen, and

and most esteemed of by us, when we compare it with the frailty and feebleness of the best state on Earth beside: for, to heighten Believers esteem of the one, he compares it with the other: *All flesh is grasse, &c. but the Word of the Lord* (and consequently their state, who are begotten again by the *Word*) *endureth for ever.* 8. What ever good esteem the Lord's People have of the *Word* of God in general, they ought to have the same of the particular Messages that are brought to them from, or according to that, *Word*, by the Lord's Servants, who are sent unto them; and ought not to content themselves with a high esteem of the written *Word*, or of the preaching thereof in the general, in the mean time having a slender esteem of these portions of Truth, which God carves out to them by the Messengers whom He sends to them: for, the Apostle leads those to whom he writes, to look upon that commendation of the *Word*, which *Isaiah* had given out before him, as agreeing to the *Word* written, and preached to them by himself, and others of the Lord's Servants in that time: *And this is the Word which by the Gospel is preached unto you.* 9. Although the precepts and threatnings of the *Word*, have their own efficiency as instruments in Gods hand, to prepare the soul for the new life by breaking and humbling of it, *Mat. 2. 37.* Yet it is mainly the Gospel, or the glad tidings (as the word signifies) of free salvation through Jesus Christ, to all lost sinners, who get grace to receive the offer thereof, whereby a new life is conveyed to, and increased, in the soul, and whereby it is brought in to that excellent state of Regeneration: for, the Apostle applies the commendation of the *Word*, which is the seed of Regeneration, mainly to the Gospel; *And this is the Word, which by the Gospel is preached unto you.*

CHAP.



## CHAP. II.

**I**N this Chapter, the Apostle goes on to presse such duties of holiness, as are most suitable for that excellent state of the Regenerate, described in the former. In the first part of it, he exhorts to growth and progress in such duties of holiness as concern all Christians in whatsoever relation they stand in the world, as namely, the study of mortification, *ver. 1.* a hearty indrinking of the Doctrine of the Gospel, because their so doing, is the means of their spiritual growth, *ver. 2.* It is the way to prove that they had experimentally tasted of the sweetness of Christ's grace, *ver. 3.* and because by their daily use-making of Christ, offered in the Gospel, they should find an increase of spiritual life, and fitness for every duty, *ver. 4, 5.* and that because the Scripture witnesseth Him to be given with the Father's good will for a solid foundation of salvation and comfort to every soul that flies to Him, *ver. 6.* Whence the Apostle infers that Christ cannot but be very dear to Believers, and that He shall not be the lesse glorious that many slight Him; who, by their so doing, shall only ruine themselves, and prove themselves Reprobates, *ver. 7, 8.* But as for those whom he hath so highly honoured, that they might be forth-coming for his praise, who had made so remarkable a change upon them, *ver. 9, 10.* Their great study ought to be, to keep up the battel against their inward lusts, *ver. 11.* and to walk so as the most wicked among whom they converse, may be allured to fall in love with Christianity, *ver. 12.*

In the second part of the Chapter, the Apostle presseth such duties as are suitable for Christians, considered under some of their special relations. And first, he exhorts them, as subjects under heathen Rulers, to respect every form of lawfull Government, whether in the person of the supream or inferiour Magistrate; and this he presseth by many arguments; First, Because they should therebq

thereby evidence their respect to Gods Command. Secondly, Because Magistrates are appointed of God for so good ends as he expresseth, ver. 13. 14. Thirdly, They should thereby silence their slanderers, ver. 15. Fourthly, Because otherwise they should abuse their Christian Liberty unto licentiousness, ver. 16. And fifthly, Because other unquestionable duties did necessarily infer this, ver. 17. Secondly, He exhorts them as servants under heathen persecuting Masters, in which case many Christians then were, to carry themselves dutifully toward such Masters, and patiently under wrongs from them, whether they were of the worst or better sort, ver. 18. and this the Apostle presseth to the end of the Chapter, by severall reasons. First, Because they might expect a gracious reward from God, if they were in to unjust sufferings from men for respect to his Commands, ver. 19. Secondly, Because it would be a disgrace for Christianity, if Christians did deserve hard usage from Heathens for their miscarriage, ver. 20. Thirdly, Because they were obliged to patience under the Crosse, by their Calling. Fourthly, Because Christ had suffered harder things for them. Fifthly, Because He had left them a sweet Copy of the right way of suffering, ver. 21. Sixthly, Because Christ was a most innocent sufferer, ver. 22. Seventhly, Because He was the most patient. And eighthly, the most confident, under greatest wrongs that ever was, ver. 23. Ninthly, Because by His death He hath purchased Reconciliation with God. And tenthly, healing to all his Peoples wounds, especially for his cause, ver. 24. Eleventhly, Since they who were once in the way to perdition, were now brought to a state of safety by Him, ver. last. Therefore they ought patiently to suffer wrongs in following their duty to Him: the pressing whereof, is the Apostles scope.

*Verf. 1. Wherefore laying aside all malice and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings,*

**T**He Apostle's scope, in the first part of this Chapter, being to presse upon all Christians the study of progresse and growth in holiness, as appears by the second and fifth Verses, he doth, in order to this, stir them up to the battel against their unmortified corruptions, giving instances of such, as are most contrary unto that love of the Regenerate, one toward another, which he had prest before, as an evidence of their Regeneration, *Chap. 1. Ver. 22.* and to that hearty receiving of the Word which he presseth in the following Verse, as the principal means of their growth in grace, not excluding other evils, not here mentioned, but leading them by these to the knowledge of all the rest, that are unbecoming a regenerate state. *Diss. 1.* There doth remain in the Children of the Lord, not only after their Regeneration, but even after some progresse in mortification, many strong corruptions, and filthy frames of spirit, which are left to humble them, *Rom. 7. 24.* and to stir them up to earnest imployment of Jesus Christ, both for mercy, and power to subdue them, *2 Cor. 12. 8.* for, upon those whom the Apostle supposed to be not only born again, *Chap. 1. 23.* but to have attained to a good degree of mortification, *Chap. 1. Ver. 22.* he doth here presse that they should *lay aside malice, and guile, and hypocrisie, &c.* 2. Our corruptions ought to be renounced with detestation, as things very noisome to be longer kept, *Isa. 30. 32.* and with a purpose never to meddle with them again, *Hos. 14. 8.* for, there is a metaphor in the words, taken from a man putting off an old suit of cloaths, full of filth and vermine, which would be both hurtful and disgraceful to be longer worn; *Wherefore laying aside all malice, &c.* 3. Even the Children of the Lord are ready to cleave very close to their unmortified corruptions; to forget the necessity of a further degree of mortification than what they have already

already attained unto; and to enertain their corruptions as if they were necessary for them; yea, and to accompt them their very ornaments: for, the metaphor in the words is taken from a man that is unwilling to shed with his garments, which, though they be old and full of filth and vermine, yet he keeps them close to him, as his necessary ornaments: *lay aside all malice, &c.* 4. Our Regenerations, and former progress in mortification, should be so far from making us indulgent to our lusts, remaining yet unmortified, that the more clear we be concerning the one, and the further advanced in the other, the more are we obliged to set against the remaining power of those unmortified corruptions, we having now stronger obligations to fight against them, greater strength for that effect, and being more ready to dishonour God by their prevailing, than formerly: for, upon those whom the Apostle supposed to be born again, to know themselves Redeemed Ones, and to have purified their souls, in the former Chapter, he presses here the study of mortification, with a *Wherefore, laying aside, &c.* 5. Our new birth is mainly evidenced to us by our opposition of, and victory over those corruptions which stir in us, contrary to that love and duty which we owe to our Brethren, the rest of the Regenerate Ones; our victory over these being the kindly effect of our victory in some measure, over our ignorance of God, Atheism, and unbelief, and such other sins as are more directly against the first Table, 1 *Joh. 3. 2, 3.* for, all the particular evils here named, are such as relate mainly to our neighbour, as contrary to that love and duty which we owe to him; and the mortification of them is here press'd, as that which should evidence our Regeneration, as appears by comparing the 23. Verse of the former Chapter, with this and the Verse following: *Being born again, &c. Wherefore, laying aside all malice, &c. as new born babes, &c.* 6. Not only is the actual hurting of our neighbour an evil, unbecoming the Regenerate Ones, but the very intention of the heart to harm him, is such an evil

and therefore to be mortified for intencion to hurt our neighbour, is the first evil, which the Apostle here dissuades from; *laying aside malice, &c.* 7. The Lord takes notice of folks cunning conveyances, of their plots and practices, which tend to the prejudice of others; those being more dangerous to the party, and more grievous, when discovered, or, felt in their effects, than more open injuries, *Psal.* 55. 11, 12, 13. for, that artificial way of hurting others, which hides the hurt intended from the party, is the next evil the Apostle exhorts to be laid aside, as is clear from the signification of the original word, *guile*. 8. As hypocrisie, in the matters of God, whereby Christians draw near Him with their lips, while their hearts are far from Him, *Mat.* 15. 7, 8. and give out themselves to be much for Him, when they are nothing so, *1 Tim.* 3. 5. is an evil very detestable to Him, *Mat.* 23. 25. So hypocrisie in dealing with others, whereby men in their words and carriage behave themselves with seeming respect and love, in the mean time aiming at the disgrace and hurt of others, *Psal.* 55. 21. is a guilt unbecoming the Regenerate, which they should study to mortifie, as they desire to prove themselves such: for, of both these sorts of hypocrisies may this third evil be understood, which the Apostle exhorts to be laid aside; *and hypocrisies*. 9. To be grieved and vexed at the good of others, their excellencies or preference before our selves, as it is a frame of spirit natural to all, *Gal.* 5. 21. and incident to the Regenerate, *1 Jm.* 4. 5. So it is an evil very detestable to God, *Tis.* 3. 3. and hurtful to the person in whom it is, *Prov.* 14. 30. and therefore to be opposed, and mortified, as most unbecoming the Regenerate, who should rejoyce in the welfare one of another, as if it were their own, *1 Cor.* 12. 26. for, this is the fourth particular, which the Apostle here exhorts to mortifie; *and envies*: which word, signifies an evil, wasting them that have it with grief at others welfare. 10. Evil speaking of others, is the fruit that grows upon malice, envy, and other inward evils of that kind, which are clearly bewrayed

wayed to be prevalent in the heart, when there is in the tongue much reviling, backbiting, contradicting, and other sorts of evil speakings, whereby the reputation of our neighbour is hurt: for, as this is here the last in order, so it may be safely looked upon as the effect, or ordinary consequent of the former; *laying aside all malice and guile, and envies, and evil speakings.* 11. However there may be some one sin, to which the heart of the Regenerate is more inclined than to others, against which one, they should mainly bend their strength, *Psal.* 18. 23. Yet, as they desire to prove themselves Regenerate, they ought to oppose and mortifie all sin, considering that they are weak before every temptation, *Gal.* 6. 1, 3. and that the root and branch of every sin is hatefull to God, and contrary to His holy Law, as is clear by Christ's exposition of it. *Mat.* 5, and 6. chap. for, the Apostle puts the note of universality to some of these evils, and puts the rest in the plural number; *laying aside all malice, and guile, and hypocrisies, &c.* 12. There are degrees of the strength of unmortified corruption, and several wayes how it vents it self; so that when one branch of it is cut off, and one way how it doth prevail is stopped, there are yet many other branches of that same sin to be searched out, and foughten against: for the first two evils here named have an *all* with them, importing, that when one branch, or degree of malice and guile is laid aside, there may be yet much of them behind unmortified: And the rest of the evils here named, are in the plural number, importing, that there are many sorts and kinds of *envies, and hypocrisies, and evil speakings*, to be mortified in every Christian; *Wherefore lay aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and evil speakings.* 13. The right order which Believers should keep in the mortifying of sin, is to begin with the inward roots thereof that are in their hearts, so shall they the more easily curb the fins of the outward man: for, in this order the Apostle presseth this study upon the Regenerate, that they should first *lay aside malice and*

*Evils, &c.* and then *evil speakings*. 24. There is no right receiving of the Word, to as souls may grow by it, till first they let about the mortifying and putting off of such filthy frames of spirit as are here named: the Truth must be received in love, both to Christ and all His People, to which the evils here named are contrary: for, the laying aside of them is here pressed as a mean toward the duty, held forth in the following Verse: *Wherefore, laying aside all malice, &c. desire the sincere milk of the Word.*

*Verf. 2. As new born babes desire the sincere milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby.*

The Apostle, having dissuaded from those evils which are great hinderances to the right receiving of the Gospel, doth here, in the next place, exhort the Regenerate to labor for such a sharp edge upon their appetite after the Truths of the Gospel, by which they were begotten, and must be nourished, as lively infants have after the milk of the mothers breasts. And this exhortation the Apostle bears in by three motives in this Verse taken from the nature, and effects of the Truths of the Gospel. 1. That those Truths are the *sincere milk*, that is, most pure Truths, without any mixture of falsehood or error. 2. That they are full of spiritual reason, and so suited to the sanctified understandings of men and women; for, the Original may be rendred, *that rational milk*. 3. That the greedy indrinking of them will prove a principal mean of spiritual growth, and progress in grace and comfort. Hence *Learn*. 1. The Truths of the Gospel are to the truly Regenerate, what the milk of the breasts is to the young infant, those being no lesse necessary, and fitted for the cherishing and entertaining of their spiritual life, no lesse refreshing and strengthening through Gods blessing to them, than this is to the new born babe: for, however the first principles, or grounds of Religion, which use to be held forth in a Catechise, are for their plainness, and fitness for the weak, called *Milk*, yet contradistinguished from

from more profound Truths, which have the name of strong meat, *Hab. 2. 13, 14.* Yet, for the causes formerly mentioned, the whole word is here called *Milk*; to be much thirsted-after by all the Regenerate: *As new-born babes desire the sincere milk of the Word.* 2. The desire of a truly regenerate person after the Word, will in some measure resemble that desire after the breasts, which is in new-born babes: for, as the best thing on earth beside the breasts, cannot be satisfactory to a lively infant; as it is most grieved for the want thereof, most unwilling to shied with it; and most delighted to have it of any other thing; So is it with the Regenerate in reference to the Word, as is imported in this exhortation, *As new-born babes desire the sincere milk of the Word.* 3. This desire of the Regenerate after the Word, ought to extend it self to all the parts thereof, every one of these having influence upon their spiritual growth: The discovering and threatening part of it, serving them as a glass wherein to see their defects and spots, *Rom. 3. 20.* that so they may be chased to Christ, *Rom. 10. 4.* The promises thereof being the channel through which, life, strength, and transforming vertue to make them resemble their Lord, is conveyed to them, *1 Pet. 1. 4.* and the precepts and directions thereof, serving as a Lamp to direct them in their christian course, *Psal. 119. 105.* for, here the Word indefinitely, without restriction to one part of it more than another, is by the Apostle held forth as the object of this desire of the Regenerate; *desire the sincere milk of the Word.* 4. This desire of the Word, formerly described, is a clear evidence of Regeneration, and a new nature; no sooner is a sinner born again by the vertue of the Spirit working with the Word, but as soon is there a kindly appetite after the Word wrought in the sinners heart, even as the infant presently after the birth, doth evidence some inclination and desire after the breasts: for, the Apostles having asserted their new birth, *Chap. v. ver. 23.* doth here put them to evidence it: *As new-born babes desire the sincere milk of the Word.* 5. There is nothing in



the Word of the Lord to deceive any that get grace to receive it by Faith, and walk by it: there being no mixture of Error with the Truths therein delivered, or of Falshood, either in the promises, threatnings, or predictions thereof: and therefore Ministers in handling of it, should keep it free of the mixture of their own inventions and passions; and People should love it, and rest upon it, because it is *the sincere milk of the Word*, or, as the Original is, the Word without guile, or mixture of any thing that deceives. 6. Although natural reason of it self, except it be elevated above it self, and enlightened by the Lord, cannot comprehend the Truths revealed in the Gospel, nor look upon them as reasonable, 1 Cor. 1. 18, 23. and 2. 14. Yet all of them are most reasonable in themselves, and cannot but be acknowledged to be such, by all that have the use of sanctified reason, when they consider what subjection and credit, we owe to Him of whom we have our being; when they compare His Precepts and Commands, with His Promises of furniture for obedience, and of a gracious reward thereof; and when they consider how Justice and Mercy are agreed, Righteousness and Peace do kisse each other, in that way of Salvation which is devised through Christ incarnate; and that neither these Truths, nor any other in Scripture, are contrary to pure natural reason, though some of them be far above the reach of it: for, this Text may be translated (as the like word is, Rom. 12. ~5.) *desire that rational and sincere milk*, 7. There are none of the Children of the Lord so far advanced in knowledge, grace or holiness, as that they ought to be satisfied with their measure, but ought still to aspire toward a further degree of growth, both downward in humility, 2 Sam. 6. 32. and stability, Col. 2. 7. and abroad in publick-mindedness, reaching it self in real endeavours after the salvation and comfort of others. Heb. 14. 5, 6, 7. and upward in joy and praise, Psal. 72. 14. for, upon those who were already far advanced in grace, Chap. 1. ver. 22, 23. is growth here pressed: *desire the sincere milk*

of



the forementioned effects thereof: for, it is only the Regenerate, who are supposed here to have *tasted how gracious the Lord is*. 3. Although the way of Believers partaking and feeling of this graciousness, or sweetness of the Lord, be spiritual, arising in their hearts from their exercising of their Faith in God, as favourable to them through Christ, Rom. 5. 1, 2. Yet it is no less real and certain, then that which is by any of the outward senses closing with, and delighting in, their proper objects. Therefore as it is elsewhere in Scripture set forth by smelling, *Psal. 45. 8.* and by seeing, *Isa. 45. 25.* So here (as also *Psal. 34. 8.*) by tasting; *If so be ye have tasted how gracious the Lord is*. 4. All that Believers get of Christ in this life, is, in comparison of that full enjoyment of Him, which they shall have in the life to come, but a taste, a sparing measure to sharpen appetite after more: for, so it is here called *a tasting how gracious the Lord is*. 5. That which proves our taste of Christ's sweetness to be kindly, and proper to the Regenerate, is, that thereby our inward and beloved lusts are weakened, and we are made to lay them aside, and to loath them, and our desires after the Word are more sharpened; by which the sweet feelings of the Regenerate are differenced from those which hypocrites may have, which have no such concomitants, *Heb. 6. 4.* for, by considering the connexion of this Verse with the former two, it appears the Apostle hath prest mortification of sin, and desire after the Word for growth, as things which could not but be in them. *If so be they had tasted how gracious the Lord is*. 6. All those tastes of the graciousness and sweetness of Christ, which the Saints may expect in this life, are to be looked for in, and through the Word: for, while he makes their former tastes of that kind; an argument to sharpen their desires after the Word, he doth clearly import, that both their former tastes of that Sort, had been through the Word, and that more of these tastes were to be found the same way, and no way else: *desire the sweet word of milk, &c. If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious*.

cious: and so would desire to tast more of that sort. 7. All the former experiences we have had of the graciousness and sweetness of Christ, should sharpen and put an edge upon our desires after more of that sort, and after the Word, through which those experiences are conveyed: for, to quicken their appetite after the Word, through which the Lord's People tast of His sweetness, he mentions their former tastes here; *If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious.*

- Verf. 4. *To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious,*  
 5. *Ye also as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, a holy Priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable unto God by Jesus Christ.*

Here is the fifth motive to the hearty receiving of the Word, taken from the great advantage of daily closing with Jesus Christ offered therein: and this advantage the Apostle sets forth in several branches; as first, That Christ should prove Himself a living; and, secondly, a solid foundation, to such as by Faith build themselves upon Him. Thirdly, That however the most part of men reject Him as unworthy to be their choice, yet is He the Father's choice, and, as our Mediatour, in high esteem with Him, and therefore worthy to be our choice, and daily to be made use of, *verf. 4.* Fourthly, That they who do close with Him, as the Gospel offers Him, shall be made in some measure conform to Him in spiritual life and stability. Fifthly, That their union with Christ, and the rest of the Saints, should be growing more and more strait. Sixthly, That so they should be made fit for entertaining communion with Himself, dwelling in them by his Spirit, as in his spiritual Temple. And seventhly, That by their so doing, they should prove themselves to be a People consecrated to the Lord (as the Priests were of old) to offer up their prayers, praises, and other parts of their Worship, which Christ is pleased

they are daily coming, doth make well-pleasing to the Father, *Mat. 1.* From *Mat. 4. Learn, 1.* With how much greater desire we do receive the Truths of the Gospel, by so much the more do we come nearer in Jesus Christ offered therein, to enjoy a comfortable communion with Him, and to partake of the benefits purchased by Him: for if we observe the current of the Apostle's speech, we may see that in stead of shewing the advantages of receiving the Gospel, he shews the advantages of closing with Jesus Christ, offered therein, importing these two to be one; *To whom coming, as unto a living Stone.* 1. It is not enough that sinners once come to Christ for life, and do close with Him, as the Word offers Him to them; but they must make a trade, and a life of coming to Him, daily renewing and strengthening the acts of their Faith in Him, for pardon and furniture for every thing they have to do, there being much distance still remaining betwixt Him and the best while they are here, *1 Cor. 5. 8. 17. 73. 28.* and still a nearer communion with Him attainable, *Philp. 3. 13.* for, coming to Christ, which in Scripture is believing in Him, *Job. 6. 23.* is here prest upon those who had believed in Him before, and that by such a word in the present time, as signifies the continuation and renewing of the acts of Faith: *To whom coming, &c.* 3. There is no growth in grace or holiness, nor in ability to oppose our corruptions, except we be thus coming frequently to Jesus Christ, in whom the fulness of grace is, *Ch. 1. 19.* and who is both our righteousness, and our strength for all we have to do, *Isa. 49. 24.* for, this coming to Christ here prest, may be looked upon as the mean of growth in mortification and every grace, as is clear by comparing this, *To whom coming, &c.* with what goes before, and follows after. 4. All that come to Jesus Christ shall find Him a solid foundation to rest upon, able to bear them and all their burdens, constant in His love to them, and in the fulfilling of all His promises; and so such He is daily to be closed with; for, for their and the like causes, He is here for faith, as

the object of Faith, under the similitude of a stone.  
 5. Christ is a living foundation for sinners to build them-  
 selves upon, having life in Himself essentially, *Joh. 1.*  
*26.* and communicating life spiritual and eternal, to  
 every soul that closes with Him, *Joh. 5. 12.* for so will  
 is he here proposed, as the object of saving Faith; *To whom coming, as unto a living stone.* 6. Fear deadness  
 should not keep any soul back from Jesus Christ, who  
 see need of life from Him, and hazard of eternal death  
 without Him, it being impossible to attain to spiritual  
 or eternal life but by closing with Him, *Joh. 6. 38.* *To*  
*coming to Him, as to a living stone,* imports, that the desire  
 of life, should draw souls that do find much deadness  
 spiritual, and do fear death eternal, to Him; *To whom*  
*coming, as to a living stone.* 7. There is not another rock  
 or foundation-stone, whereupon the Church, or any other  
 Member thereof, can be built, but Jesus Christ himself.  
 The Prophets and Apostles, are only called the founda-  
 tion, *Eph. 2. 20.* in so far as they hold out, in their  
 Doctrine, this living foundation: and this Apostle, by  
 that Rock, whereupon Christ said He would build  
 His Church, *Mat. 16. 18.* did not understand himself,  
 or his successors, (though never so faithfull Minis-  
 ters) but Jesus Christ Himself, whom he had a  
 little before confessed to be this living stone; and there-  
 fore he thus holds Him forth here; *To whom coming, as*  
*unto a living stone.* 8. Though Christ be a solid and li-  
 ving foundation for sinners to rest upon, Yet is He re-  
 jected by the most part of men, as unworthy to be their  
 choice, He having little outward glory to draw hearts  
 toward Him, *1/a. 33. 2.* and all men being naturally  
 blind concerning His spiritual excellency, *2 Cor. 4. 4.*  
 and their own need of Him, *Rev. 3. 17.* and then being  
 but a very few, in comparison of the rest that are given  
 unto Him, to be saved by Him, *Joh. 12. 39.* therefore  
 is it that He is *disfavored indeed of men.* 9. Others rejecting  
 of Christ, should be so far from discouraging, as to  
 to close with Him, and make use of Him, that by the

contrary, it should move them to a more hearty and firm  
persuasion closing with Him, being confident that He shall  
deal the better with them, that they are not hindered or  
discouraged by the example of rejecters, from closing  
with Him: for, even this may be also looked upon, as  
having the strength of an argument to move those who  
have hitherto been strangers to Christ, to come now to  
Him; and those who are near, to come yet nearer, that  
He is *disallowed, indeed of men*. 10. Christ is disallowed,  
when he is not fled to, and made use of, for that life and  
rest, and other advantages to be had in Him; for, in op-  
position to Believers coming to Him, and use-making  
of Him, He is said to be *disallowed, indeed of men*. 11. Je-  
sus Christ, not only as He is God, but as He is our Me-  
diatour, is, and hath been from eternity, *Prov.* 8. 30. the  
Father's choice and delight, in highest esteem with Him;  
which is evidenced by the Father's giving all things into  
His hand for our good, *Mat.* 11. 27. and all for that  
very end, that He may be honourable in our esteem, *Joh.*  
5. 23. by His hearing of Him as our Intercessour in all  
His petitions, *Joh.* 11. 42. and hearing all our lawfull  
desires for His sake, *Joh.* 16. 23. and by the unspeakable  
terror which He will manifest against rejecters of Him,  
beyond what other sinners shall find, *Heb.* 10. 28, 29.  
All which do prove, that as our Mediatour, He is most  
dear and precious to the Father, and worthy is He to  
be so, there being none in heaven or in earth fit for that  
work of Redemption but He. *Rev.* 5. 4, 5. Therefore is  
He *chosen of God, and precious*. 12. The Father's high  
esteem of, and delighting in, the Mediatour Christ should  
move sinners to come to Him, to choose Him for their  
portion, and to delight in Him, being confident that their  
so doing cannot but be well-pleasing to the Father, who  
hath chosen Him that He may welcom sinners, and hath  
fitted Him to be all things to them that may contribute  
for their blessedness, *1 Cor.* 1. 30. for, this is a motive  
of coming to Him, that He is *chosen of God, and pre-  
cious*.

From

From ver. 1. *Learn*, 1. Christ's way of engaging the hearts of His own to a daily use-making of Him, is by proposing to them, in His Word, the sweet advantages, and rich priviledges, which they shall have by their so doing: with the consideration wherof, he allows them to move their own hearts to perseverance in that exercise. For, this Verse doth contain a bundle of advantages and priviledges, that souls have by daily use-making of Christ, branched out to move them thereunto, to wit. That by their coming to Him, as to a living stone, they also as lively stones are built up a spiritual house, &c. 2. Every renewed act of Faith, closing with Christ, as the Scripture holds Him forth, doth draw from Christ some new increase of spiritual life, wherby the soul is made more sensible of sin, hath more appetite after Christ and His Truth, and more activity in duties that may honour Him: all which, are effects of spiritual life, and resemblances betwixt it and the natural life: for, this is here made a prevailing motive to that coming to Christ, which is recommended to sinners in the former Verse, that they who did so, should be made *lively stones*, which must be understood of an increase of spiritual life, it being spoken to them, who are supposed before to have been born again. 3. Even as Believers are holden throng in daily employing, and use-making of Christ, so do they make progress in grace and holiness, so do they also become solid, and fixed in their understanding of the Truth, that they may not be carried about with every wind of doctrine, constant in their love to Christ, and in their believing of His love to them, and established in their walking like unto His Truth: for, in opposition to the unsteadiness of mis-believers, and of them who do not live in the daily employing of Christ, but rest upon their measures received, those that are daily coming to Him, are here said to be *lively stones, built up, &c.* importing, beside their progress, a state of stability and fixedness, which they attain to by their so doing. 4. The lively and frequent exercise of Faith, draweth virtue



from Christ to make the Believer resemble Him, in those communicable perfections of His, wherewith the Scripture holds Him forth adorned, and to be clothed with by sinners, so that under whatsoever consideration of Christ held forth in Scripture, sinners do close with Him, they are thereby in some measure changed to some likeness with Him in that consideration: if the unclean soul close with Him, offered under the consideration of a fountain, it becomes in some measure like Him in purity and holiness; if the dead sinner receive Him, offered as life, he becomes to live like Him; if the unstable soul come to Him, as the foundation-stone, it grows stable as a stone; and so of every consideration, under which Christ offered in the Word is clothed with; for, He being before proposed under the consideration of a living stone, as the object of Faith to be clothed with, the Apostle here affirms, that they who did so close with Him, should find that by their so doing, they *also as lively stones should be built up*. 5. Those souls, who may expect that the Lord will keep communion with them, and dwell familiarly in them, as in His House, must labour to be made spiritual, in their minds enlightened, and elevated to discern things spiritual, which the natural man cannot do, 1 Cor. 2. 14. 15, Pro. 8. 12. in their affections humbled, in the sense of their unworthiness and sinfulness, Isa. 57. 17. confident of their acceptance with God through Christ, Heb. 6. 3. chearfull in Him as reconciled to them, Psal. 22. 3. loathing sin, and loving holiness, 2 Cor. 6. 16. &c. and all persons that are holy, 1 Job. 4. 16. All which the Scriptures cited make clear to be parts of a spiritual frame, which is to be studied by all those who may expect the Lord to dwell in them, as in His House: for, Believers, in order to their enjoying of fellowship with Christ, are here said to *be built up a spiritual house*. 6. The more heartily and frequently sinners flee to, and make use of, Jesus Christ, as the Gospel offers Him, the more fit are they to be an habitation for Him to dwell in, and the more familiarly will He converse with them: and that

that becaufe the only way to staid in, and grow in, a spiritual frame, which makes sinners a fit habitation for the Lord to dwell in, is to be daily dying to, and making use of, Jesus Christ, who gives the Spirit for working of this frame, 1 Cor. 3. 18. for, Believers by coming to Him, 1st. 4. are here said to be built up a spiritual house, 7. Near union with Jesus Christ, and daily use-making of Him by Faith, is the best way to make the Saints one among themselves; the division, difference of judgement, and alienation of affection among them, proves one or other, or all of them, to be at a distance from Him; for, while the Apostle saith, *To whom coming, &c.* *To are built up a spiritual house*, he doth import, That Believers by their closing with, and use-making of, Jesus Christ, are as closely united one of them to another, as the stones of a building are. 8. Every particular Believer should esteem himself a part of the Church universal; which maketh up one house to God, 1 Tim. 3. 15. and so should seek the good thereof, Psal. 122. 9. and sympathize with the sufferings of the whole, or any member thereof, 1 Cor. 12. 25, 26. seeing *they are built up*, (to wit, in the universal Church, with the rest of the members thereof) *a spiritual house*. 9. Although the most eminent Believers may not take upon them any part of the Ministerial Office, without a lawful and orderly calling thereunto, Rom. 10. 15. Heb. 5. 4. yet all Professours of Christianity, do in some respects resemble the Priests under the Law, in so far as they are separated by the Lord from all the rest of the world; and true Believers among them do receive that unction from the Lord, to wit, the holy Spirit, 1 Joh. 2. 20. which was signified by anointing, wherewith the Priests were anointed, Exod. 28. 41. and have their service accepted, while others are rejected; Prov. 15. 2. in which respects they are here called, *Antitypical Priests*. 10. Although internal, or real holiness be not the necessary qualification which maketh one a member of the visible Church, Act. 2. 41. Joh. 1. 11. Yet it is the duty of all to study that holiness, and so

mark of all the true and lively members of the Church, to be entered therewith: therefore they are here called *holy Priests*. 11. The great employment of Believers in Jesus Christ is, to offer sacrifices to God, not typical, which are now abolished by Christ, *Heb. 10. 1.* nor expiatory, which Christ alone hath once offered, never to be repeated, *Heb. 7. 27.* but *gratulatory*, in testimony of their thankfulness to Him, for that sacrifice of Himself for them, such as the sacrifice of themselves for His service, *Rom. 12. 1.* their penitence and humble supplications, *Psal. 51. 17.* and 141. 2. their praises, *Heb. 13. 15.* and their charity to his Saints, *Philip. 4. 18.* These and the like are they to offer who are a *holy Priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices*. 12. What ever sacrifices of this sort Believers offer up to God, they must be spiritual, done from a spiritual principle, a new nature, *Eph. 36. 26. 27.* upon spiritual furniture, the strength of Christ, *Philip. 4. 13.* and for a spiritual end, the glory of Christ, *1 Cor. 10. 31.* In which and the like respects they are here called *spiritual sacrificers*. 13. Such spiritual sacrifices as Believers offer up to God, are well-pleasing to Him, not for any worth that is in them, *Isa. 61. 6.* or advantage they can be to Him, *Psal. 16. 2.* *Heb. 17. 25.* But because they are presented to God by Jesus Christ, who taketh away the iniquity of their holy things, *Exod. 28. 38.* and doth perfume their service with the incense of his merits, *Rev. 8. 3.* Therefore are their sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.

*Verbi 8. Wherefore it is contained in the Scripture, Behold, I will give in Zion a chief corner-stone, elect, precious; and he that believes on him shall not be confounded.*

The Apostle doth confirm his former Doctrine, concerning the usefulness and excellency of Jesus Christ for the Church and Believers in Him, by a testimony of Scripture, which (though no particular place be here cited) may be found *Isa. 28. 16.* And withall, he addeth

two further arguments to moue us to that hearty receiving of the Gospel, and use-making of Christ's death in us, which he hath putt in the former words: The one is, That we have Jesus Christ, who is the Father's darling, and highly esteemed by Him, with the Father's great good will, laid in the Church as the foundation, and chief corner-stone thereof, for every soul to see to; and rest upon. The other is, That whosoever betake themselves to Him by Faith, shall never need to be ashamed of their so doing. *Rom. 1.* The Ministers of Christ ought to have the written Word so richly dwelling in them, that they may be able to confirm every Truth they deliver from that Word; and the Lord's People ought to be so well acquainted with the same, that though Ministers do not spend time to cite particularly every Chapter and Verse, where every passage they bring forth is to be found, they may notwithstanding, upon the hearing of it, faithfully and for the substance repeated to them, acknowledge and receive the same for the Lord's mind: for, even the Apostle here, as frequently elsewhere, doth confirm his Doctrine by Scripture; and yet, supposing none to whom he writes well acquainted, at least with the letter thereof, he doth not condescend upon the particular place, judging insufficient to say, *Wherefore it is contained in the Scripture, Behold, I say, &c.* 2. True Faith can have solid footing no where but upon the written Word of God; nor should any of the Lord's People be satisfied with the most pleasant notions about Christ, till they see them grounded upon, and drawn from, that Word: therefore the Apostle, having in the former words commended Christ as the object of saving Faith, now here repeat again the same commendation of Him from the Old Testament, that so Faith might rest safely upon Him as such a one: *Wherefore it is contained in the Scripture, Behold, I lay in Zion a chief corner-stone, &c.* 3. True Faith, and the alone, is due to the Church, and to none but that due to Him, which the chief corner-stone

whether the lowest or the highest, is to the building : He is the stone first laid, in regard He was and behaved to be actually exercising His Mediatory Office, before any sinner could attain to union or communion with God, *Col. 1. 18.* He is the stone, laid lower than any of the rest in His humiliation, *Psal. 22. 6.* He bears the weight of the whole Church, and of every believing soul, *Heb. 1. 3.* He is more curiously wrought than any of the rest of the stones of the building (as the chief corner-stone useth to be) and engraven by the art of His Father, adorning Him with all perfections suitable for the necessities of poor sinners, *Zech. 3. 9.* He is the bond, whereby most differing Nations, such as *Jews* and *Gentiles*, are united in one building, *Eph. 2. 16.* as the foundation corner-stone knits the two side-walls of the building together ; He is the perfection of the whole, in whom the building, and every lively stone thereof is compleat, *Col. 2. 10.* as the highest corner-stone, and as that also, He is the glory and ornament of all the building, *Isa. 22. 24.* In all which He is resembled by that, whereby the Spirit of the Lord here sets Him forth to our capacity, *The chief corner-stone.* 4. We have this great blessing, Christ for the chief corner-stone of this spiritual building, with the Father's great good will, who hath laid Him, first, In His eternal Counsel or Decree, as the word used by *Isaiah*, chap. 28. 16. and here translated *to lay*, doth signifie, *Psal. 2. 2.* Secondly, In His actual exhibition of Him to the Church as Mediator : first, in the promise of Him, *Gen. 3. 5.* and next, visibly in our flesh ; for, so this word is also used, to signifie the publishing or execution of things formerly decreed, *2 Chron. 9. 23. Prov. 3. 19.* And thirdly, in His exalting of Him, when He had perfected the work of Redemption, so much of it as concerned Him to do in the state of his humiliation : for, so this same word, (used *Psal. 8. 2.*) is translated, *Mat. 21. (6.)* to perfect a work. In all which respects, the Father layes Christ the foundation or chief corner-stone, in the Church ; and calls

all to behold what pleasure He hath in so doing: *Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner-stone.* 5. The Father's condescendency to give His own blessed Son, for the above-mentioned uses to His Church, and Believers in Him; which this similitude, here made use of, holds forth, is worthy of our most serious consideration; and Christ, this chief corner-stone, is much to be admired, as differing from all other corner-stones, He being one stone, who is both the lowest and highest of the building, *Psalm* 118. 6, 7. who hath immediate connexion with the least stone, or meanest Believer, as well as with the greatest or most eminent, whether Prophets, Apostles, or even the virgin *Mary*, *Jeb.* 17. 20, 21. who communicates an influence of life and growth, to every stone laid upon Him, *Eph.* 2. 21. and who never suffers any that are built upon Him to fall totally and finally off Him, *Jeb.* 10. 28. In all which respects we are here called to admire Jesus Christ, and to give our most serious attention and consideration to the Father in giving Him, by this word, which serves both to draw attention and admiration; *Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner-stone, &c.* 6. Though Christ be God's gift to the whole Church, made up of *Jews* and *Gentiles*, *Eph.* 2. 14. which often hath the name of *Sion* in Scripture, *Obad.* 17. Yet with a special reference to the Church of the *Jews*, who first had that name, He is said to be laid in *Sion*, being first preached publicly, and held forth in Promises, Sacrifices, and Types to them, *Psal.* 147. 19, 20. being come of them according to the flesh, *Rom.* 9. 5. and first offered to them after His incarnation, *Matth.* 16. 5, 6. from whom the news of Him is come to the rest of the world, *Mica.* 4. 2. and by whom Christ shall yet have a great part of His publick glory in the world, *Hos.* 3. 5. *Rom.* 11. 12, 13. All which should make us pity their present case, and pray for their conversion: for, with a special eye to them is this spoken, *Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner-stone, &c.* 7. Christ's fitness for this great work of our Redemption, evidenced by the Father's choosing of Him for it.

from among all others, as the word *dear* signifies, and by His high esteem of Him as our Mediator, should strongly draw the hearts of sinners in to Him, and move them to dwell much upon the thoughts of His worth, and of the Father's esteem of Him, as He is the receiver of all that come to God through Him: for, the Apostle, having commended Christ before, from these two Epithets, that He is *chosen of God*, and *precious*, as motives to draw sinners in to Him, repeateth them here again, as delighting to write and think of so sweet a subject as Christ; *Bless, precious.*

8. That which builds sinners upon Christ, this chief corner-stone, is that grace of believing, which, according to the signification of the word in the Hebrew, whence the Apostle translateth this Text, is, the fixedness, or stayedness (as this same word is translated, *Exod. 17. 12.*) of the soul in the expectation of salvation through Christ, offered in the Gospel; and whereby the soul is fed and nourished upon Him, as its necessary food, which is also in the signification of the word in that Language: for, the Apostle, instead of insisting further upon the metaphor of a building, which should have required him to say, he that is built upon Him, shall not be ashamed, speaketh properly, expounding what it is to be built upon Him, to wit, to close with Him by Faith; *He that believeth on Him shall not be ashamed.*

9. Patient waiting on God, in the use of His means, for the performance of His promises, without such hastening to a delivery as makes us faint or fret under the delay thereof, or use unlawful means for attaining to it, is the kindly effect of saving Faith, and that which keepeth off shame and confusion, which such hastiness occasioneth to the Lord's People: for, the Apostle, translating these words of *Isaiah*, *He that believeth maketh not haste*, expresseth the effect of not hastening in the afore said sense to be this, *He that believeth on Him shall not be confounded.*

- Verſ. 7.** Unto you therefore which believe He is precious: but unto them which be diſobedient, the ſtone which the builders diſallowed, the ſame is made the head of the corner.
- 8.** And a ſtone of ſtumbling, and a rock of offence, unto them which ſtumble at the Word, being diſobedient, whereunto alſo they were appointed.

The Apoſtle, having commended Chriſt, that ſinner might be moved to make uſe of Him, as the Goſpel offers Him, doth here hold forth the dignity and diſpoſition of all that believe in Him; as alſo the diſpoſition, and judgment of all that reſect Him, that ſo none might ſtumble or be diſcouraged, when they ſee Him reſected by ſo many. As for Believers, Chriſt is an honour to them, and they have a high eſteem of Him: both which readings, the original words, in the beginning of the ſeventh Verſe will bear. And as for others, who will not be perſwaded to believe and obey the Goſpel, that ſtores Jeſus Chriſt the Mediator, whom the Ruler of His time ſet at nought, is exalted by the Father (according to the Pſalmiſts word, *Pſal. 118. 22.* which the Apoſtle here rehearſes) to be the glorious Head of the Church and Believers, and a terror to all, whoſe blind and carnal hearts, do ſtill ſee out ſomething in the Goſpel, whence they take occaſion to reſect Chriſt, and reſuſe to take on his yoke; and thereby do beguine themſelves, as a mad man that daſhes himſelf againſt a ſtoor in his way; or, fooliſh Mariners, that run their ſhip againſt a rock, which are the ſimilitudes here made uſe of, taken out of *Mat. 23. 14.* and ſo do prove themſelves to be Reprobates. Which purpoſe contains three further motives to preſſe that hearty receiving of the Word, and uſe-making of Chriſt offered in it, which the Apoſtle hath recommended in the former words: every one of which motives, ſerve to guard againſt the offence that might ariſe from wicked men reſecting of Chriſt. The firſt is, That Chriſt



Jesus is an honour to all that believe in Him. The second is, That his glory is nothing diminished by others rejecting of Him, *ver. 7.* And the third, is, That they who continue so to do, will but run themselves upon that ruine, to which they have been from eternicity appointed, for their rejecting of an offered Saviour, *ver. 8.*

From *ver. 7.* Learn, Christ is the true honour of all that truly believe in him; He is a great credit to all his poor kinred, who are honoured by him, not only to serve him, but to be served by him, *Mat. 10. 28.* and by his best Servants, *Heb. 1. 14.* to be made Sons of God, *Joh. 1. 12.* to have a marriage-relation to him, *1 Cor. 11. 2.* to be heirs and co-heirs of glory with him, *Rom. 8. 17.* and it doth not yet appear, but we shall know it afterward how much is in this word, which in the Original is in the abstract, and runneth thus, *Christ is an honour to you that believe.* 2. Jesus Christ is most dear and precious to all that truly believe in him, he being their life, *Gal. 3. 4.* their light, *Joh. 1. 4.* their wisdom, *1 Cor. 1. 30.* their food, *Joh. 6. 56.* their raiment, *Rom. 13. 14.* and every thing to them which is most necessary; and consequently most precious to the children of men: and therefore cannot but be in so high esteem with them, that the very thoughts of him, *Psal. 139. 17.* his Ordinances, *Isa. 58. 13.* his people, *Psal. 16. 3.* must be precious and excellent to them; and their most precious things in this world cannot be dear to them, for his sake, *Mat. 20. 24.* but must be dung and losse that they may gain him, *Philip. 3. 8.* And this esteem of Christ, where ever it is, in any real measure, is a clear mark of true and saving Faith: for, so much is expressed in our translation of the word, *Unto you that believe he is precious.* 3. It is our clear up-taking of Christ in his excellency and usefulness for sinners, as the Word reveals him, and some experimental feeling upon our closing with him, that he is such a one to us, which begets this precious esteem of him in the hearts of Believers: we can never esteem of him, till we know how excellent an one he is

and

and tast in some measure how gracious he is: for of those, whom the Apostle supposeth to know Christ in some measure, as he is formerly described, *ver. 6, 7.* and to have tasted how gracious he is, *ver. 3.* he affirms *hath unto you therefore which believe he is precious.* 4. They who do not believe in, and esteem highly of Jesus Christ, they are not only guilty of neglecting and slighting of him, (the hazard whereof is unspeakable, *Heb. 2. 3.*) but they are also guilty of high rebellion and disobedience to God; it being one of his greatest and most peremptory Commands, to believe in his Son, *1. Joh. 3. 23.* and to honour him, *Joh. 5. 23.* Without obedience to which, it is not possible to give any acceptable obedience to any other of his Commands, *Heb. 11. 6.* There is no midst betwixt these two, men must either believe in Christ, and have a precious esteem of him, or be disobedient and rebellious: as the word signifies. Therefore the Apostle thus expresseth that disposition, in opposition to believing, and a precious esteem of Christ, *Form which be disobedient.* 5. Although Jesus Christ in his dealing with souls, hath the strongest reasons upon his side that ever were used with any, *Pro. 8. 5. &c.* and great variety of most alluring motives to gain souls to his obedience, *Mat. 11. 20, &c.* Yet there are a great many who are so addicted to their own will and lusts, *Jer. 18. 25.* that they will not suffer themselves to be perswaded by him, either to receive information to their minds from him, or to admit that he should reform their hearts and lives: for, this description of the wicked, doth design persons that have been by strong reasons and alluring motives dealt with, but have shewen themselves stiff from all yeelding or perswasion; *But unto them which be disobedient.* 6. Those whom God hath placed in Authority in, or over his Church (and who are obliged to Christ for their place and power more than others, not only to build themselves by faith upon him, but to employ their ministry power to draw many others in to him, and one of them to work to another head, like to many

builders in the advancement of his work) are too often found opposers of his work, and detractors of himself, as if he were unworthy to be laid as a stone in their building, or that his interest should be minded in their designs: for, those who were in Authority in Christ's time, are designed by this name of *Builders*, to which they should have been answerable; but it was not so: *Christ was the stone which the builders disallowed.* 7. The higher any be set in eminency of power or place above others, the more doth the Lord reprove and take notice of their rejecting of him, and opposing of his work: for, although many of the common people among the *Jews*, did reject Christ, for which they bear their judgment, *Matt. 23. 38.* Yet this guilt, is mainly charged upon the Rulers: *The Jews which the builders disallowed.* 8. Christ, our Mediator, will not be the less honourable, nor will his glory be any whit diminished, that many, and those the chief among men, do reject him and slight him; But rather that will tend to his greater glory; the Father taking occasion by their so doing, to let out the more of his grace and love to his own Church and People that embrace him; and to illustrate his justice the more, in the ruine of rejecters of him: for, while Christ is disallowed of the builders, What comes of him? For the comfort and glory of his Church, *He becomes the head of the corner*; and for the terror and ruine of his enemies, *a stone of stumbling, &c.*

from *der. 8. Leon*, 1. Although there be nothing in Christ to make any stumble or offend at him, *Jer. 23. 7.* but every thing that might draw the desire and delight of all toward him, *Psal. 43. 2. Hag. 2. 7.* yet through reason of mens blindness, and ignorance of his worth and excellency, *Isa. 59. 4.* of their own hazard by rejecting of him, *Isa. 53. 34.* their violent persecution of their *Lord*, *Jer. 8. 6.* and malice against any that would hinder them in their pursuit, *Isa. 53. 45.* and such other things were intended by the cause of mens stumbling and such way. They do take occasion from the weakness

and



since so to do, but those who have been from eternity  
 ordained for condemnation, in Gods spedeless decree,  
 which doth infuse no evil in men; *Jam. 1. 12.* seeing they  
 live with no lesse freedom and delight, than if there were  
 not a decree concerning their reprobation, *Ab. 2. 27.*  
*28.* and are not damned because of a decree, *1 Theff.*  
*2. 12.* but either because of their sinning against natures  
 light, *Rom. 1. 21.* and *2. 12.* or for their wilfull slighting  
 of an offered Saviour, *Job. 3. 20.* The continuance in  
 which sin, is the clearest proof and evidence of reprobation,  
 of any in the world: for the everlasting ruine and  
 condemnation of souls, ordained from eternity to the  
 same, for their wilfull slighting of Jesus Christ, is re-  
 lated unto in the last words of this Verse, as being there-  
 by most clearly evidenced; *They stumble at the Word, be-  
 ing disobedient, whereunto also they were appointed.*

Verse 9. *But ye are a chosen Generation, a royal Priesthood,  
 an holy Nation, a peculiar People, that ye should shew  
 forth the praises of him, who hath called you out of dark-  
 ness into his marvellous light.*

After the description of the wofull estate of them that  
 slight Christ, the Apostle returneth again to illustrate  
 further the excellency of the state of true Believers, to  
 whom these honourable titles, which the Lord vouch-  
 safed of old upon the visible Church of the Jews, *Exod.*  
*19. 6.* and *Deut. 7. 6. 7.* (and so may yet in some sense  
 be lawfully applied to all visible Professors) do most fully  
 and truly agree: for, speaking to all the *Hebrews*, who  
 were Professors of Christianity, he affirmeth, first, That  
 they were wailed out from among the rest of the world,  
 which is true of all of them, in so far as they were made  
 members of the christian Church; and of some of them,  
 in a more special way, in so far as they were made ob-  
 jects of his special grace and love; and so they were a  
*chosen Generation.* Secondly, That they did partake of  
 the benefits of Christs Kingly and Priestly Office, and did

did, in some respects, resemble him in the exercise of both, in so far as all of them, were professed, and some of them, true subjects of Christ, the King of the Church; all of them were by profession, and some of them by actual calling, separated from the world for his service, and had spiritual privileges, answerable to those of Kings and Priests; and so were a *Royal Priesthood*. Thirdly, That they were all of them federally holy, and some of them endued with true sanctification; and so were a *holy Nation*. Fourthly, That all of them, who did externally subject themselves to Christ, were owned by him, as his propriety and prime interest, in comparison of the rest of the world; and true Believers among them, as his Elect and Redeemed Ones; and so were a *peculiar People*. And all for this end, that they might in their practice commend and express his properties, to his praise, who had called all of them externally, and some of them effectually, out of the state of sin and wrath to a state of favour and happiness. Which purpose, containeth two further arguments to press a hearty receiving of the Gospel, and daily use-making of Christ offered in it, in order to their spiritual growth; The one, taken from the excellency of their present estate, in the several fore-mentioned particulars; The other, from that wonderful change, which God had made upon them, from so wofull, to so blessed a condition. Hence Learn, 1. It is very safe, and suitable to Scripture-language to give unto the whole visible Church, and all the Professors within the same, these titles and corruptions, which do only agree in their full and best signification to true Believers: Suppose the most part within the visible Church, void of saving grace; yet, in respect of the rest of the world, and by virtue of that Covenant which is betwixt the Lord and her, and all her Members. Deut. 26. 17, 18, and 29. 10, &c. all Professors may, in some sense, have all the titles that are here in the Text, and others like them: for, though these titles be most and justly justified in Believers; Yet, did the Lord of old give them

in the whole Church of the Jew: and the Apostle  
hath given them indefinitely to all the nation of the Jew,  
who were professors of Christ, to whom he speaketh  
though with a special eye to those who were true Be-  
lievers among them: *Ye are a chosen Generation*, &c.  
2. So excellent is that state, whereunto sinners are ad-  
vanced, by believing in Jesus Christ, that the sharpest  
sighted in the world, the longer they look upon it, will  
still see more and more of the excellency and priviledges  
thereof: The discovery whereof to the Lord's People,  
especially while they are under affliction, should much  
take up the heart and pains of all the Ministers of Christ,  
it being his peoples prime comfort under all their crosses,  
and their chief motive to all their duties, that they are in  
so excellent a spiritual state: for, after the Apostle hath  
largely described it in the former Chapter, and spoken  
much of it in the former part of this, he cometh yet again  
upon the branching out of it here: *But ye are a chosen  
Generation, a royal Priesthood*, &c. All which titles, do most  
truly agree to true Believers. 3. They who do by Faith  
choose Jesus Christ for their portion, who entertain in  
their hearts a high esteem of him, and do make use of  
him daily for growth in grace and holiness. They have  
the character and marks of such as have been from  
eternity elected of God, and in time effectually called,  
there being no other ordinary way to evidence the latter  
to us but by the former, 2 Pet. 1. 10. for, of Election and  
effectual calling in reference to true Believers, may this  
be understood, which here the Apostle affirmeth of those  
to whom he said before, that Christ was precious: *But  
ye are a chosen Generation*. 4. As that dignity, whereto  
true sinners are advanced by flying to Jesus Christ doth  
in a spiritual sense, resemble that of the Priests under the  
Law (as was shewed in the tenth Doctrine upon the 11th  
Verse 1). So are they also thereby brought unto a King-  
ly dignity: and in a spiritual sense, they only are truly  
royal, having a new nature in some measure resembling  
the divine, 2 Pet. 1. 4. being co-heirs with Jesus Christ

(Page 3. 17.) We shall therefore consider be that, *Ans.* 2. 2. and therefore consider we own all our spiritual graces. *Ans.* 3. 17. In all which, and the like, besides, they are a *Royal* People. 5. Our union with Jesus doth not only oblige us to keep a distance from the disposition and profane fictions of the men whose portion is in this earth, and to consecrate our selves wholly for the Lords use in the study of holiness; but likewise it doth really make Believers a holy People: In so far as he is daily made use of by Faith, their hearts are purged from the love of sin, *Act.* 2. 5. 9. and they are made to exercise other graces and duties of holiness where in he is honoured. *Gal.* 2. 20. for, this third branch of the commendation of their excellent state, includes in it their duty and their privileges. They are a *holy* Nation. 6. As all the people on earth are the Lords, they being all the works of his hand, and under the disposal of his providence, *Act.* 17. 26. and all the Members of the Church visible, are His in a more peculiar way than others, *Ans.* 3. 2. So Believers in Jesus Christ are in the most special way his property and peculiar people, whom he hath purchased to himself as a dear people, *1 Pet.* 2. 28. and made new again by a second creation, *2 Cor.* 5. 17. in whom he doth delight, *2 Cor.* 13. 17. and whom also he will maintain and keep, *1 Pet.* 5. 10. for this is the fourth branch of the dignity of his People, which doth in some manner extend to the whole company of Professours, and most especially to true Believers, that they are a *peculiar* People. 7. That which the Lord intend in bestowing all these privileges on Believers, and which they should make the great end and business of their life, is; That they may show forth the praises of the Lord, by quivering on (as the Psalmist saith, *Ps.* 145. 21.) which the Apostle here mentions in this manner, as the Lord himself His blessed graces and virtues, as his word here rendered makes out the original) or rather by their praises and testimony commending his name to the glory of the Father as the 10. Verse of this Chapter.



and Faithfulness, manifested in his dealing, *Psalm 145*,  
in *Psalm 135*, that so others may be stirred up to love  
him and praise him; but especially by their expressing  
and holding forth in their practise some resemblance of  
his properties to his praise, *Philipp. 2. 15. 16*, by their  
prudent and wise carriage, declaring to on-lookers that  
he is most wise, by whose counsel they are guided; by  
their bazinging upon affliction, rather than sin; demon-  
strating his terror, to be above the terror of itself; and  
by their patience; and chearfulness under crosses and  
trials, proclaiming to discerning beholders that his power  
is great, that sustains them; that his consolations sweet,  
that do refresh their hearts under such afflictions, and  
make up the bitterness of them: for this is here set down  
as the end of all the fore-mentioned privileges, and the  
compend of Believers duty, *that they should shew forth  
the praises of him.* 8. Even the Elect, before conversion,  
not living in gross ignorance of their own miserable  
condition, and the remedy thereof, *Job. 5. 8*, in the fla-  
mour of their lusts, *Rom. 7. 5*. They are under a stain  
as much as well as others, *Job. 2. 2*, and so without any  
special comforts, *Job. 2. 10*. All which, in Scripture, is fre-  
quently set out by this word *darkness*, whereby the Apo-  
stle expounds the state of the Elect before conversion.  
9. Conversion brings them into a state of light, which  
competeth with some clear knowledge of their own misery,  
*Psalm 2. 8*, and the remedy thereof, *1 Cor. 4. 6*, a new  
and spiritual life communicated to them, whereby they  
are united to Christ and cleave unto him,  
*John 15. 1*, they receive a measure of life, *Mat. 5. 16*, their  
living in his love, *1 John 4. 15*, their having a right  
wisdom, *1 Cor. 2. 6*, and his allowance to joyce and  
ambition in their blessed estate, *Rom. 5. 2*.  
10. The word *shew forth* signifies by this word, what  
the Apostle saith in the excellent flow of Conversion  
hymns, *Phil. 2. 17*, *that they should shew forth  
the praises of him.* 10. The word *shew forth* is much to be ad-  
vised, denoting the large manifold manner

gency in plucking them out of so woful a condition as they were in before; his marvellous loving-kindness, in possessing them in such excellent privileges as they have in their new state; and giving them an undoubted right to so matchless an inheritance, as cannot but surpass the power of their understanding to comprehend, and to make them wonder at their own happiness, which is here called *marvellous light*. 13. The way how the Lord brings his own out of the state of nature, which is here called *darkness*, into the state of grace, which is called *light*, is by his calling of them by the Gospel, 1 Thes. 2. 14. opening their hearts to receive it, by the power of his Spirit coming along with it; 48. 16. 14. and is powerfully changing them into his own Image, 1 Cor. 2. 18. *Who hath called us out of darkness into his marvellous light*. 12. These upon whom the Lord hath wrought this blessed change, ought frequently to reflect upon their former woful state, that they may be kept humble; 1 Cor. 15. 9. and compassionate to others, who are yet in the like state; 1 Th. 3. 1. 2. and likewise upon their present blessed condition, that they may be provoked to praise, and the study of holiness. 1 Tim. 2. 16. The cause of the like causes, the change of Belshazzar from the one state to the other, is here represented to their view, that they might store forth the praise of him, who hath called them out of darkness into his marvellous light.

Ver. 10. *Which in times past were not a people, but are now the people of God to whom he hath obtained mercy*.

There is a further description of the happy change wrought upon these Chosen People, to whom the Gospel, to wit, that they, who were formerly in the state of nature, had now become the people of God, and so had obtained mercy.

had saying and special mercies offered to all of them, and bestowed upon some of them, So that *Hosea's* Prophecy (*chap. 4. 32.*) concerning the restoring of the Jewish Nation, after their rejection for a time, had now a begun accomplishment in them; especially, in those of them who had felt the fore-mentioned remarkable change, whereby they should be moved to live to the praise of him that made it. Hence *Learn*, 1. When the Lord speaks to his Church in one age, or to some particular persons in it, he doth often speak also to his Church in after-ages, and to all the rest of his People who are to live afterward. See *Mark 13. 37.* and *Heb. 13. 4.* compared with *Job. 1. 6.* and therefore it is the duty of all his People, to mark how far promises, made long since to the Church, on particular Believers in it, have their accomplishment toward themselves; that so, the finding what was long since spoken to others, made good to them, they may be the more affected with that ancient and constant love of God, whose thoughts had been upon them for good, while he was speaking to others, who lived many ages before them: for, the Apostle once and applies this Scripture, spoken by *Hosea*, to the People in his time, as now verified upon these Christian Believers to whom he writeth, *Which in this part were not a people, &c.* 2. They that would delight in shewing forth the praises of God, and have their hearts engaged to the study of holiness, must learn to dwell upon the thoughts of their wofull case, wherein they were before conversion; and upon the blessed state wherewith, through Gods mercy, they are advanced; and often to compare the one with the other, that so they may be the more affected with the change, and be moved to study his mercies that made it: for, as the Apostle had in the former Verse manifested this to them, so now, as a further manifestation, he doth here insist upon it, and repeats the same words by a new enlargement of it, (which is usually styled in this Context) *Which in this part were not a people, but are now the people of God.*

*God's love.* Although the elect be the Lord's People from eternity in regard of his purpose of grace toward them, *Psal. 135. 1.* *Psalm. 139. 1.* Yet, in regard of any actual manifestation of special love to them, or of his complacency in them as carrying his Image, they are not his People; but remain slaves to Satan, *Job. 1. 2.* and to their own lusts, *Psalm. 139. 1.* until such time as by his power put forth with the preaching of the Law, their wicked case be discovered to them, *Luke 1. 17.* and by the same power, coming along with the preaching of the Gospel, they be made willing to accept the offer of Reconciliation through Jesus Christ, *Psal. 110. 1.* and thereby also be fitted for the duties of new obedience for the honour of Christ, *Isa. 43. 21.* All which, in the places cited, proves are marks of them whom he doth in a special way elect for his People: for, of the chosen Generation the Apostle thus speaketh, in reference to their state before and after conversion; *Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God.* 4. Though there be not a finner in the world, who hath not many mercies of God freely bestowed upon him, *Psal. 143. 9.* and many deserved strokes kept off him, *Rom. 2. 3.* Yet, even the Bless'd before their conversion, have not obtained that special mercy, whereby their sins are actually pardoned, *Isa. 19.* and whereby the Lord hath complacency in them, *Ezek. 16. 2.* and so they cannot be justified actually from eternity: for, only of true Converts, is the Apostle's speech here principally to be understood, *which is this.* That in time past (so was before their conversion) they had not obtained mercy. 5. The offering of himself by them with Jesus Christ, as the Gospel offers him to them, doth bring them to a most sweet and excellent state, whereby they be owned and dealt with by the Lord as his People, in a most special manner, whom he will never forsake, *Psal. 94. 14.* and so obtain mercy of him for pardoning their daily frailties, *Psalm. 139. 16.* for preserving and supplying, as is fitting, all their necessities, as the words translated, *to whom mercy supplies,* and for their

through all the strains of their life, *2 Cor. 12. 6.* and at last crowning them with glory, *2 Tim. 4. 18.* All which is comprehended under this, That they are now the people of God, and have now obtained mercy. 6. Of all miseries that can be exprest, to live in an unconverted state under unpardoned sin, is the greatest; And of all privileges in this world, to be brought out of that state, and so obtain mercy, is the greatest, and the most engaging to the study of holiness: for, the one is here held forth, as the depth of misery; and the other, as the height of happiness; and the change from the one to the other, as one of the strongest engagements to duty, lying upon those, who in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: who had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.

*Verf. 11. Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul.*

The Apostle repeateth, and enlargeth that which he pressed in the first Verse of this Chapter, in order to their spiritual growth, to wit, That they should keep up the battle against their inward unmortified lusts; and this is prest by three arguments. The first, is taken from Christ's affection and the Apostle's toward them, as being dearly beloved of both. The second, from their hard lot in the world, that they were strangers and pilgrims; which was verified, in a special way, of these scattered *Hebrews*, to whom he writes. And the third, is, from the hazard of the prevailing of these lusts, which is no lesse than the eternal ruine of the soul. Hence Learn 1. There doth remain, even in those who are far advanced in mortification, such swarms of sinfull motions, and strong inclinations to evil, yet in a great part unmortified in them; and so prone are they to give way to them, and so fall back in the battle against them, that they are in great need of exhortation upon exhortation, and

of one motion upon the back of another: to stir them up  
to that exercise: for, even those whom the Apostle sup-  
posed to have made some progress in mortification, Chap.  
1. ver. 22. and whom he had exhorted to further pro-  
gress therein, in the first Verse of this Chapter, he doth  
here again exhort very earnestly to the same by several  
arguments: *Dearl' beloved, I beseech you abstain from  
fleshly lusts, &c.* 2. True mortification of sin, consisteth  
not only in abstinence from the outward acts thereof,  
but in the weakning of the root and power of sin with-  
in, and the inclinations and desires of the soul after the  
acting thereof; which are here called *fleshly lusts*, in re-  
gard they tend to the gratifying and pleasing of the flesh,  
and are acted by the outward man, *abstain from fleshly  
lusts.* 3. The best way for Believers to fit themselves  
for the shewing forth of the praises of God in their pre-  
sence, is, To set about the mortifying of those motions  
and inclinations to sin that remain in their heart, these  
being the cause of all the out-breakings which disho-  
nour God in their conversation, *James, 4. 1.* for, this ex-  
hortation, may safely be taken as the mean of attaining  
to that which is the great end of Christians calling, ex-  
press't in the former Verse, That they may shew forth his  
praise, they must *abstain from fleshly lusts.* 4. The love  
of the Lord, manifested toward sinners, should be a very  
strong argument to move them to fight against their lusts  
which dishonour him, and mar the sense of his love, and  
the further manifestation thereof: for, this stile *Dearl' be-  
loved*, may be taken as an argument to the duty press'd,  
and understood mainly of the love of God to his people  
because, the Apostle Paul (*Rom. 9. 25.*) citing the place  
which this Apostle cited immediately before, doth find in  
this stile in reference to God: and therefore this duty  
may be conceived to make use of it here in the same  
sense, as a motive to the study of mortification, *Dearl' be-  
loved, abstain, &c.* 5. Those who presse people to the  
mortifying of their beloved lusts, had need be very  
acquainted with love to them in their hearts, &c.

may deal earnestly with them; but likewise, by some prudent expressions of their love to them, to inflame themselves up in their affections, that so the stirring of their passions (which are ready to rise, when unmortified corruptions are touched, both in good, 1 *Cor.* 10. 10. and bad, *Mat.* 14. 4. 5.) may be prevented: Therefore, the Apostle breaths forth his affection to this People, which may be safely taken to be also comprehended in this compellation, as following after Christ, and moving the Apostle to much earnestness, *Dear beloved, I beseech you abstain, &c.* 6. As it may be the lot of those, who in regard of their right to the Covenant of Grace, and the benefits thereof, are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens of the Saints, and of the Household of God, to be separated from their native Country, as these Christian *Hebrews* were, to whom this is spoken; So, what ever their condition in the world be, they ought to esteem and confess themselves (as the best of God's Saints have done, *Heb.* 11. 13.) strangers and pilgrims, who are absent from their own Country, 1 *Cor.* 5. 6. and may expect hard usage in their way, *Gen.* 31. 15. who ought to lay aside every thing that may hinder them in their journey, *Heb.* 12. 1. and have their hearts still homeward, *Heb.* 11. 16. who should take little pleasure in the delights that offer themselves in the course of their pilgrimage, *Gen.* 23. 4. and esteem it a great honour to get leave to do any piece of service to God, while they are upon their journey, 1 *Chron.* 29. 15. and should count touch of any mercifull providence they meet with, *Job* 2. 10. and make their case an argument to God for his pity and kindness, *Psal.* 119. 19. and a motive to themselves to abstain from every thing that may hinder them in their journey homeward: for this is brought in by the Apostle, as an argument to all the duties of holiness, and especially, to the study of mortification, that they were *strangers and pilgrims*. 7. The inward motions of unmortified corruptions, which are in the Godly, do not only fight against the welfare of their bodies, *Psalm* 14.

7. against their light and knowledge of God, which is  
 in their understandings, Rom. 7. 23. and against the  
 graces and motions of God's Spirit, which are in their  
 hearts, Gal. 5. 17. But likewise against the everlasting  
 well-being of their very souls, so that these corruptions  
 cannot be given way to, except we would (so far as in  
 us lies) run the hazard of the losse of our souls: for,  
 this is here a third motive to the mortifying of these lusts,  
 that they war against the soul. 8. The Lord doth allow  
 Christians to stir up their hearts to the study of the mor-  
 tification of their corruptions, by the consideration of  
 the hazard that cannot but follow upon their prevailing,  
 which is no lesse than the wounding of their souls by  
 every advantage their corruptions do get; and the eter-  
 nal losse and ruine of their souls, by the continual pre-  
 vailing of them, as is imported also in this motive to  
 the mortification of these fleshly lusts; *They war against  
 the soul.*

ver. 12. *Having your conversation honest among the Gen-  
 tiles; that whereas they speak against you as evil doers,  
 they may by your good works which they shall behold,  
 glorifie God in the day of visitation.*

In this Verse, the Apostle prescribeth the effect of his for-  
 mer exhortation; and without prescribeth a special mean  
 of shewing forth the praises of God, to wit, That Chris-  
 tians should labour to express holiness in their outward  
 conversation: and this he heareth in by two arguments.  
 The first, is, That their lot was to converse among the  
 enemies of the Gospel, and such as would be glad to find  
 occasion from their miscarriage to slander them as evil  
 doers. The second, is, That their holy walking among  
 such might prove a blessed mean, not only to stop the  
 mouths of their slanderous enemies; but likewise to  
 bring about their conversion, and consequently bring  
 much glory to God, when it should please him to visit  
 them with his saving grace. Hence comes, 1. The first



as the power of sin is weakened in the heart, there will  
 be a beauty and loveliness upon the outward conver-  
 sation; which, if it be defiled with out-breakings, doth  
 clearly evidence the power and prevalency of unmo-  
 rted lusts in the heart. For, as a necessary consequent, or  
 effect of the former exhortation, to abstain from fleshly  
 lusts, the Apostle bringeth in this, *having your conver-  
 sation honest.* 2. It is not so much by a fair profession, or  
 good expressions, that Christians do shew forth the  
 praises of God, as by an *honest conversation*, made beau-  
 tiful and lovely (as the word here translated *honest* signi-  
 fies) to on-lookers, by the right ordering of all the parts  
 of it in duties to God and men, *Psal.* 50. 23, by the ma-  
 nifesting of wisdom and meekness therein joyntly, *1 Tim.*  
 3. 13. and especially, by the faithful discharge of the du-  
 ties of their particular callings and relations, *1 Thess.* 4.  
 11, 12, *Tit.* 2. 9, 10. for, the way of the Apostles bring-  
 ing in this exhortation, giveth ground to take this as an  
 mean of attaining to what he had prest before, to wit  
 their shewing forth of the praises of God, mentioned  
*ver.* 9. *having your conversation honest, &c.* 3. The more  
 wicked the society be, with whom Believers lot is to con-  
 verse, the more should they be stirred up to the study of  
 an honest conversation, for the conviction or gaining of  
 such: for, by this that these Christian Hebrews were  
 among Heathens (whom many professors of Christiani-  
 ty resemble, in living like Heathens without respect to  
 the Law of God, *Rom.* 2. 13. pursuing strongly their  
 Idols, as Heathens do, *1 Cor.* 12. 2. and being unac-  
 quainted with the privileges and duties of the Cove-  
 nant of Grace, as Heathens are, *Eph.* 2. 11. and ready to  
 persecute all that run not their course, *1 Pet.* 4. 3.  
 which the Scriptures cited, make characters of them)  
 the Apostle persuades them to study holiness in  
 life: *having your conversation honest among the Gentiles.*  
 4. Those of whom the world is unworthy, are often re-  
 presented to the world as unworthy to live in it, by their  
 dishonest ways and are reproved by their honest  
 con-

conversation: for, as it hath been supposed to be the lot of the  
 chosen Generation, the royal Priesthood, &c. to be *set against* *as evil doers*. 5. It is one of the characters of  
 them that are without God in the world, to be *speakers*  
 to, and slanderers of those, who will not run with them  
 in the same *evill doers* riot: for, it is here a description  
 of the Heathens, that they speak against those who are of  
 an honest conversation, *as evil doers*. 6. The best way  
 for Christians to stop the mouths of their slanderers, is  
 by an honest conversation: without which, any other  
 means they can use, will readily prove ineffectual for  
 maintaining their reputation: for, here the Apostle pre-  
 scribeth to Christians the study of a holy walking, as a  
 mean to put their very enemies upon an exercise in-  
 consistent with slandering of the Godly, *having your conver-*  
*sation honest among the Gentiles; that whereas they speak*  
*against you as evil doers, they may by your good works which*  
*they shall behold, glorifie God.* 7. Although the Word,  
 accompanied with the powerfull blessing of God, be the  
 principal mean of sinners conversion, Rom. 10. 17. yet  
 the Lord may make use of the very carriage and vi-  
 sible acting of his People, (such as, their equity in their  
 dealings, even with their enemies; their patient bearing  
 of injuries from them, and continuing to expresse love  
 and respect to them notwithstanding thereof) to allure  
 wicked men to fall in love with his way, and to give  
 him glory that ever sent them such a mean, and blessed  
 into them, for their reclaiming from the way of pendi-  
 cious: for, here, an *honest conversation* is pressed, as a mean  
 of gaining the enemies of Christ and his People, to *glor-*  
*ifie God in the day of visitation.* 8. Neither the best use  
 of natural power of free-will, that unrenewed men may  
 amend, nor all the pains that the Godly can take up-  
 on them, will be sufficient to bring about that glorious  
 work of their Conversion, whereby the Lord is so much  
 glorified, till he be pleased to visit them with his power,  
 Rom. 10. 13. and with his love, to make the change, Eccl.  
 1. 1. for, here, are necessary pre-requisites, for the gain-

ing of means to glorify God, the Apostle supposeth that there must be a *day of visitation*, whereby must be understood a visitation in special mercy; in regard it giveth the means to *glorify God*. 9. It is not any glory to our selves from men, that should be our motive to an honest walking among them; but that we may thereby bring forth glory to God from them: which being honestly aimed at by us, shall bring sufficient glory to us along with it. 1 Sam. 2. 30. for, this is here made the principal motive to an honest walking. That thereby others might be moved to *glorify God in the day of visitation*. 10. The Children of the Lord should not lose their hopes, nor quit their endeavours of gaining the greatest enemies to God or themselves, among whom they live, considering how soon and easily the Lord can make a change upon them; for, the Apostle would have them looking upon those that were Heathens, and speaking against them as evil doers, as such whom God might visit in mercy, and in whose conversion they might be made instrumental. *having your conversation amongst the Gentiles, as they speak against you as evil doers, they may by your good works which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.*

Verf. 12. *Submit your selves to every Ordinance of man as to the Lord's sake, whether it be to the King, as supreme.*  
14. *Or unto Governours, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evil doers, and for the praise of them that do well.*

In this second part of the Chapter, the Apostle exhorteth to those particular duties, whereby Christians may shew forth the praises of God, and commend themselves in their several relations: And his first exhortation, in order to these ends, is, That they should carry themselves with respect and submission to any form of lawful government, established in the several Countries where they were scattered, whether the same were exercised

the supreme Magistrate or by the inferior; which several forms of Civil Governments, he calleth a Humane Ordinance; mainly, because the Lord hath not determined in his Word, what particular kind of Government every place in the World should have, whether Monarchy, or some other form; but hath left the determination thereof to humane prudence, walking by the general rules of his Word: And this exhortation the Apostle inferreth upon the former, wherewith the first part of the Chapter is closed, as a special mean of gaining wicked man to glorifie God; and presseth the same by two reasons; The first, is taken from the respect, which Christians owe to the Command of God, who is the Author of Magistracy: The second, is taken from the good ends for which Magistracy is ordained. To wit 1. for the punishing and suppressing of wickedness; And, 2. for the promoting and encouraging of piety and vertue. Hence *Lam.* 1. The Lord is graciously pleased to call for respect, as the hands of his People, toward those who carry no respect to him, that thereby he may either gain faith to his obedience, or heap coals of fire upon their heads: for, unto Heathen Magistrates he is here calling for subjection and obedience in the hands of his People. *Submit yourselves to every Ordinance of man.* 2. Although Civil Magistracy be a Divine Ordinance, in regard it is of Gods appointment, *Exod.* 2. 19. Yet it is here called a humane Ordinance, in regard it is mainly exercised about humane affairs, and for the good of humane society as such, in regard the particular forms thereof are to be determined by men, as was touched in the Exposition; and in some cases, may be altered by those to which respects, it differeth from that spiritual Government, which Christ hath established in his Church, the King wholly about spiritual affairs, *2 Cor.* 10. 2. the particular form thereof determined by Jesus Christ in his Word, and never to be altered in any place of the world, *Isa.* 4. 1, 2, 14, 18. For Civil Government for the two mentioned respects, is due to all men: *1 Pet.* 2. 13.

Each-suslick, is here called an *Ordinancer of Law*. 3. Not only private Christians, but also the publick Ministers of Christ, and all ranks of professors of his Name, are bound to give submission and obedience in things lawfull, unto lawfull Magistrates; though they prove enemies unto Religion, under whose Dominion Gods Providence hath cast their lot; which submission, doth consist in a reverend esteem of the persons of Magistrates, because of their Office. *Eccles. 10. 2.* in the maintaining of their Authority and respect before others, especially their Subjects; *Exod. 22. 27.* in giving of our worldly substance for that end, *Rom. 13. 7.* in our earnestness with God in prayer for his blessing upon their Government, *1 Tim. 2. 1, 2.* and in suffering patiently, and with due respect to their Persons and Office what they do unjustly inflict for disobedience to their unlawful commands. *Alb. 23. 5.* for, this exhortation is given both to the Officers and Members of the Church, scattered through those Nations who had only Heathen Kings and Governours. *Submit your selves to every Ordinance of man.* 4. The dutiful and submissive carriage of Christians, towards wicked Magistrates, is a special mean of commending Religion to the profane, and gaining of them to glorifie God, who use most unjustly to represent Christ's Subjects as enemies to Civill Magistrates. *Alb. 24. 5.* for, this exhortation may be considered to be pressed as a special mean of attaining to that honest conversation among the Gentiles, who spoke against Christians as evil doers, especially in the matter of their loyalty; wherunto the Apostle did exhort in the former Verse; *Submit your selves to every Ordinance of man.* 5. It is agreeable to the mind of God, that there be plurality of Magistrats, several in the number or Incorporation of people; it being not fit for any one, or a few, by reason of the multitude of their wit and strength, to administer Justice unto all men. *Exod. 18. 13, 21.* which people were brought unto that state, to prevent their fall and ruin. *Deut. 1. 15, 18. 7. 16.* And *Exod. 18. 22.*

that there be some order among these Magistrates; some  
of them in greater eminency and power than others; for  
so the Apostle supposeth here, while he mentioneth ma-  
ny Magistrates, and some of them more eminent than  
others; *Whether it be to the King as suprem, or unto Govern-  
ours.* 6. Although the suprem Magistrate, may be a  
prime instrument in appointing and promoting inferior  
Magistrates in the exercise of their Office; *2 Chron. 19. 9.*  
in which respect the inferior may be said to be sent by  
him, to wit, *the Suprem*; Yet are the Lord's People no  
lesse straitly bound to obey and submit to the inferior,  
acting in his Station, than to the Suprem acting in his;  
the one being effectually Judge, and in God's place, to  
the people, as well as the other, *2 Chron. 19. 6. Prov. 2.*  
*15.* for, the Apostle doth press equally, and upon the  
same grounds, submission to both, *Whether it be to the*  
*King as suprem, or unto Governours, as unto them that are*  
*sent by him.* 7. This submission and obedience, which  
Christians owe to lawfull Magistrates, ought to flow  
from their respect to God's Command, enjoying the  
same; and from love to Him, who hath established that  
order among men, and would have his People com-  
mending Religion to heathen or infidell Magistrates by  
their respect to his Ordinance in the persons of such; so  
that whosoever have due respect to God and his  
Commands, and love to Him, will his Honour they want  
the principle of true loyalty to Magistrates, whose great  
care therefore should be, to advance true piety and love  
to God, and his Commands in the hearts of those  
Subjects, as they love to find true loyalty in themselves;  
for this is here made the principle and motive  
to Christians subjection to Magistery, *For this sake,* for  
*this sake*. 8. Magistrates should be all full of  
gracious intentions, let be encouraged, in any way  
under their power, whether civil and secular  
things, *1 Pet. 2. 13, 14, 17.* or spiritual and ecclesiastical  
things, though never so contrary to their private  
interests than the other, *1 Pet. 2. 13.*

where is the great part of their administration due: This  
is a principal part of their Duty: to restrain and  
punish all such: for, this is here made one end of Magi-  
stracy, comprehending one chief part of the Duty of Ma-  
gistrates: for the punishment of evil doers. 9. It is the  
Duty of Magistrates, to put most honour upon, and give  
most encouragement and respect to those that live most  
subject to the will of Christ, those being the best friends  
of Magistrates; and the disgracing or wronging of them,  
being, in a special way, reſented by Christ, the Supreme  
Magistrate: for, this is another end of their Office, and  
branch of their Duty, that they are *for the praise of them  
that do well.*

*Verſ. 19. For ſo is the will of God, that with well doing ye  
may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men.*

The Apostle in this substance, his first argument,  
whereby he did, rest upon Profession of Christianity  
for subjection to law, and Magistrates, was, that this  
was plainly contrary to the will of Him, who  
shows all Magistrates, and withall, he addeth a third  
That Christians resistance against Magistrates  
should prove an effectual means of confusing the culture  
of uncomfortable men, who being incited against  
the Lord's People, did raise up their enemies to Christ  
the more, that so they might make persecution against  
them: Hence *Verſ. 17. It is not so much the fear  
of man, for neglect of duty, as the apprehension of  
vengeance by the performance of it, in the consideration  
of the will of the Lord, which should be the prime and  
perpetual motive of Christians to do their duty: and  
that his will is always never so far above our  
reason, and contrary to our natural inclination,  
as that we should be forced to it. In our obedience  
we should be able to say, *Mark 3. 35.* for the  
Father's will is done in us. *Job 12. 22.* He is  
able to do what we cannot, and he will again make us*

for to the end of the world, the servants of the Lord  
summons and Magistrates, it is their duty which hath  
been ordinarily given in against the Gossie by wicked  
men, who hate us the death thereof, who, by their  
walking do reprove and shame their persons, and  
therefore labour to engage those in power against them  
as their enemies, *Psalm 39. 10. for, as it was ordinari-  
ly charged upon the Servants and People of God of  
old, Jer. 37. 13. Ezech. 12. 13.* So the Apostle pre-  
scribing a way to these Christian Hebrews how to silence  
such slanders, importeth, that it was, in his time, the  
ordinary way of the Gossie, to whom he writeth, *that  
with well doing ye may put to silence*, *Tit. 2. 10.* Although it  
be fitting sometimes for the Lord's People, to use verbal  
apologies for their own clearing, and other lawful means  
of defence against false aspersions, *Job 31. 29. and  
35. 2.* Yet a holy and christian exercise, & the most  
powerful mean (though it be more tedious than any  
other) to confute the calumnies of wicked men, and  
to bind up their mouths, (where they would be loose)  
from speaking against the Gossie, is, the apostle, ha-  
ving recommended this mean for the use before, *Tit. 2.*  
prescribeth it here again, importing the silence as to the  
end for which he prescribeth it, and likewise some  
willingness in people to make use of it, *that with well  
doing ye may put to silence*, (in which word, there is a  
metaphor taken from the putting of a muffle upon the mouth  
of some wild beast, or wild-dog, such as are malice  
slanders of God's People are) *the name of peace*,  
*Tit. 2. 4.* The ground of wicked men's malice, which  
is set against the Gossie in slander, and in calum-  
nious aspersions of them, especially to them in power, is  
that they are greatly ignorant, & void of the sense of their  
duty, who should at least use diligence to serve the  
Lord in himself, *Zech. 2. 4.* and of the duty of admonishing  
others in authority, to do so, by example and word, that  
people may discharge their duty, and make use of  
their Office in silence, and in peace, and in love.



4. 30. for here the Apostle leads the Lords People to take the malicious calumnies of wicked men; for the language of their ignorance, that so they might rather pity and pray for them, than study to requite them, as their Lord did upon the same consideration, *Luke 23. 34.* while he thus directs, *with well doing put to silence the ignorance of foolish men.* 5. They who employ their wit to make the Lord's People odious, and bring them under hazard from those that are in power over them, although they may have as much use of it as may get them the ear and favour of them that are in power, and may prevail by their calumnies to bring trouble upon the Godly; Yet, are they really and in Gods esteem, mad and demented, as the word here signifieth, being by their so doing they run the hazard of the wrath of Him, who is a jealous and a terrible God against his Peoples enemies, *Isa. 49. 14. 17.* for, the Apostles scope and strain here, doth import, that malicious slanders of the Godly, given in to those in Authority, had such acceptance and weight with them, as to occasion the rise of persecution from them against the Godly; and yet those who gave in these slanders, are here represented by the Spirit of God as ignorant and foolish men.

*Ver. 16. As free, and not using your liberty for a cloak of maliciousness, but as the Servants of God.*

The Apostle in answer to an objection, which hath been in the hearts of some professors, against that subjection, which he had prest upon them, to Civil Magistrates, to wit, that their christian liberty did exempt them from it; especially, those Magistrates being wicked, and pagans, bringeth in a fourth argument to prove the same: The sum whereof is, That however Believers be brought by Jesus Christ to a state of true and spiritual freedom; Yet the Lord doth not allow them so make their christian liberty a pretence or vail to cover any wickedness; and consequently, not that wickedness of

despising and rejecting his Ordinances of Magistracy; but on the contrary, doth enjoy them all as the Liberty, purchased by Christ: wholly, as an engagement and motive to his service. *1 Cor. 13.* Believers in Jesus Christ, are by him advanced to a state of true liberty and freedom, which doth not consist in a liberty to sin against God, which is Satans slavery. *1 Tim. 2. 26.* nor in freedom from the sweet yoke of his service, whether it be in attending his Ordinances, to which he hath tied us till his second coming, *Mat. 28. 19. 20. 1 Cor. 13. 26.* or the duties we owe to others of his People. *Gal. 5. 13.* But it doth consist in our freedom from the Law as a Covenant of works, by which we are not to seek justification or Salvation. *Gal. 3. 18. Rom. 7. 24. 25.* we are free from the guilt of sin, *Tit. 2. 14.* from the dominion thereof, *Rom. 6. 22.* and the curse due thereunto, *Rom. 8. 1. 2.* and from the yoke of Mosaiical Ceremonies. *Gal. 5. 1.* and, especially, in this we are free, that we are honoured and enabled to do God acceptable service, *Psa. 110. 45.* In all which respects, Believers are presupposed truly, free according to the Apostles concession here, *As free. 2.* Even the Redeemed Ones by Christ have as much corruption remaining unmoorified in their hearts after Regeneration as makes them in hazard, not only to commit wickedness and excuse the same; but to make the priviledges they have through Christ, and particularly their christian liberty, a cloak to hide it, as if sin were no sin in them, or as if Christ had purchased to them liberty to sin: for, so much is imported in the Apostles dissuading Christians here not only from refusing subjection to Magistrates, but from despising the same, and using their liberty as a cloak of their wickedness: *As free, and not using your liberty for a cloak of malicious subtilty. 3.* When Christians shake off any duty next to the Moral Law, under a pretence that their christian liberty gives them warrant so to do, they are thus prone to fall into depths of wickedness, as hath much of shewed in it: especially, not that any that would offend

them in that course; and such as will spread to more and more wickednesse: for, the Apostle sets forth here Christians, defending their exemption from obedience to Magistrates, with the pretext of their christian liberty, by such a word as doth comprehend in the signification of it, all wickednesse; and points especially, at that particular sin of malice, or envie; *Not using your liberty for a cloak of maliciousnesse.* 4. These iniquities which are unjustly charged upon all the Godly by wicked men, may be justly charged by the Godly themselves upon their own hearts, as inclinable to those iniquities, which do break forth in some: for, the Apostle, having in the former Verse, called them ignorant and foolish men, who did slander all Professors of Christianity, as enemies to Magistracy, doth here warn all to beware to make their christian liberty a cloak of it, while he saith, *Not using your liberty as a cloak of maliciousnesse.* 5. The right use which Believers ought to make of that liberty, which Christ hath purchased for them, is to be thereby the more strictly engaged to his service; our serving of Him being a great part of true christian liberty, *Psal. 119. 45.* and one great end of God's giving a Redeemer for us, *Luke 1. 74.* for, here the Apostle discovers wherein the right use of christian liberty did consist, to wit, that Christians who are truly free, should carry themselves as the servants of God.

*Verse 17. Honour all men. Love the Brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the King.*

The fifth argument, whereby the Apostle presseth upon all Christians due subjection to Civil Magistrates, is taken from the necessary connexion that is betwixt this and other unquestionable duties: of which, the Apostle giveth three instances; every one whereof, doth in some sort infer the equity of this duty, which was questioned by some of them: The first, is, That some respect is due to all men; and therefore much more to Magistrates,

Magistrates. The second is, That christian society should be very dear to all the Lord's People; and consequently they ought to respect Magistrates under whose power and protection they do enjoy the same. The third is, That they should stand in awe to offend God, and therefore should give that honour to Magistrates, which he had so straitly enjoyned by the Apostle before, and here presseth again in the close of this Verse. Hence *Learn*, 1. While the Ministers of Christ are earnestly pressing some one special duty upon the Lord's People, they ought also joyndly to press such other duties as are to be joynd therewith in their practice, and may be helpfull toward the performance of that, lest by insisting much in the pressing of one duty, without mentioning of others, which ought to be carried along therewith, the Lord's People may receive such impression of the necessity of that one, as may make them forgetful of others, not only equally necessary with that one, but also subservient toward the performance of it: for, while the Apostle is earnestly pressing subjection to Magistrates by many reasons, he intermixeth a bundle of other duties, which are necessary to be joynd in practice with that; and being made conscience of, will fit them for the performance of it, *Honour all men. Love the Brotherhood. Fear God.* And so, *Honour the King.* 2. It is a prevailing way of dealing with the Lord's People (which Christ's Ministers should study) to bear in upon them duties more questionable, against which they may have some prejudice, as necessary concomitants or effects of other duties, which they do lesse question, and will more easily subject themselves unto, that from the acknowledged equity of the one, they may be brought to yeeld to the other, which hath necessary connexion therewith: even as it is a most convincing way of reasoning upon any subject, to make use of premises easily assented to, for gaining assent to some questionable conclusion, which is the Apostle's way here: for, while he presseth the duty of subjection to Civil Magistrates, from which some

Professors of Christianity did apprehend themselves cramped by their christian liberty, he presseth upon them such other unquestionable duties as did infer that subjection by the force of good consequence; if they found themselves bound to honour all men, to love the Brotherhood, to fear God, then they could not but find themselves bound also to *honour the King*. 3. Although there be some so grossly and avowedly wicked, that they ought to be contemned and esteemed vile by the Lord's People in comparison of others, *Psal.* 15. 4. Yet there is no man, to whom the Children of the Lord do not owe some respect; considering that all men do partake of some excellency from God, *Ab.* 17. 25. &c. and carry some resemblance of his Image, *Jam.* 3. 9. and that the best may know more to be loathed in themselves, than they can do in the worst, *Philip.* 2. 3. and that the worst, for ought we know, may be within the compasse of God's election, *1 Cor.* 7. 16. for which causes, we ought to give them some signs of our respect, that so we may keep our selves in the better capacity of doing good to their souls; *Honour all men*. 4. It is not only the duty of every Christian to give a special measure of love and respect to the persons of other Christians, beyond what they give to any other men, *Psal.* 136. 3. and to evidence the same by their sympathy with, and supply of, one another under their necessities, *Gal.* 6. 10. But also to love the society one of another, both in the exercise of publick Ordinances, to which Christ hath promised his special presence, *Mat.* 18. 20. and in the more private duties of mutual edification, which are very pleasant to the Lord, *Psal.* 3. 16. and profitable to themselves, *Heb.* 3. 12, 13. for the Apostle having exhorted to *honour all men*, subjoyneth this, as a further degree of respect, not only to the Saints themselves, But as the word signifies, to their society, *Love the Brotherhood*. 5. It should be the great care of the Children of God, to carry along in the discharge of every duty, the feat of God in their hearts: which is a frame of spirit that he worketh in all that are in

in Covenant with him, *Jer.* 31. 40. whereby they have every known sin, *Prov.* 8. 23. and, in obedience to him, aim at every commanded duty, especially, those of their particular relations, *2 Chron.* 19. 7. and is entertained by the believing consideration of the terror of the Lord, *Psal.* 119. 119, 120. his excellency, *Job* 12. 11. his goodness, *Hos.* 3. 3. and his proneness to pardon sin, *Psal.* 130. 4. All which is comprehended under this duty, which seasoneth all the rest, here pressed; *Fear God.* 6. There is a special measure of honour and respect due by the Lords People unto those whom God hath set in lawfull Authority over them, beyond what is due to any others on earth, by reason of their place, wherein they resemble the Majesty of God to his People, *Psal.* 82. 6. for, the Apostle, having exhorted in the beginning of this Verse, to honour all men, as if that honour which is due to all, were not sufficient for Magistrates, he closeth the Verse with this, *Honour the King.* 7. The Lord's People, are so to honour Magistrates, as that they forget not the fear of the Lord, and the duties comprehended under it, in the first place: without which no duty can be faithfully discharged to any man, *Luke* 18. 2. for, this is not only the order of the words here, but of the purpose it self, *Fear God, Honour the King.* 8. These duties, against which the hearts of the Godly have some prejudice, and the neglect whereof, proveth most offensive to the profane, had need to be frequently and earnestly pressed upon the Lord's People: for this duty was unpleasant to many Professors, and the profane apprehending it to be so to all, were incensed against Christians: Therefore, the Apostle, having pressed it before, *ver.* 14. reneweth his exhortation to it here again, *Honour the King.*

*Ver. 18. Servants be subject to your masters with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the forward.*

The second exhortation to the study of holiness, for shewing forth the praises of God, is directed to Christian Servants, in which rank the greatest number of Believers then were, who seem to have been in hazard, under pretence of their christian liberty, not only to shake off subjection to Magistrates, (as was shewen before) but to their particular Masters (the most part whereof were also at that time Heathens) unto whom, the Apostle presseth Christian Servants to give subjection and obedience, with all fear, to wit, of offending God, or their Masters; and that not only to the better and more equitable sort of them, but even to the more austere and inhumane. Hence *Learn, 1.* As the Children of the Lord in the meanest and hardest condition wherein his providence doth cast them, may be instrumentall in bringing some glory to Him; So, He is especially glorified by them in their conscionable discharge of the particular duties of that relation wherein they are fixed: for, the Apostle (having shewen the end of all Believers privileges, to be, that they might shew forth the praises of God, *ver. 9.*) holdeth forth this to persecuted Christian Servants, as one principal way of shewing forth His praises; *Servants be subject to your Masters.* 2. One wrong principle, being admitted in the minds of Christians, concerning the matters of God, may be the occasion and rule of manifold disorders in their practice: for, it is clear from the former purpose, that the mistake of Christians, concerning the nature of their christian liberty, did make them apprehend themselves exempted from subjection to Magistracy; and by this exhortation immediatly subjoyned, compared with *1 Cor. 7. 20, 21, 22.* it doth appear that the same mistake hath prevailed, to make Servants apprehend exemption from subjection to their Heathen Masters, which makes the Apostle

Apostle find it necessary to presse them to this duty, *Servants be subject to your Masters.* 3. Although there be some of the great ones of the earth, given by the Father to Christ the Mediator, who will therefore receive Him, and subject themselves to Him, *Psal. 72. 10.* Yet the most part of His Subjects and Servants are of the poorest and meanest in the world, whom He chooseth, to commend the freedom of His grace, and the condescendency of His love, which often lights upon the Servant, and passeth by the Master: for, it would seem, there hath not been many Magistrates or Masters, in those Nations where these believing *Hebrews*, to whom the Apostle writes, were scattered, who have been fit to be spoken to, which makes the Apostle omit them, and speak to their Subjects in the former words, and to their Servants here, *Servants be subject to your Masters.* 4. Christian liberty, doth not exempt Christian Servants from subjection to their Masters, though they were Heathens, but doth consist with obeying all their lawful commands heartily, and as service to God, *Col. 3. 22, 23.* in giving due respect to their persons, as being placed above them, as the word here signifieth: for, this is here prest upon the chosen Generation, and such as were truly free by Jesus Christ; *Servants be subject to your Masters.* 5. Not only the immediate acts of God's Worship and Service, should be gone about with much fear and reverence to Him in the heart, *Psal. 2. 11.* but even these outward Duties, which we owe to men, should be seasoned therewith, that so Christians, even while they are employed in most common duties, may be in the fear of the Lord all the day long, *Prov. 23. 17.* for, this is the qualification of that subjection, which Christian Servants owe to their Masters, *Be subject with all fear.* 6. It may be the lot of the Lord's dearest People, not only to be in the rank of Servants, which is a part of their likeness to their Lord for His outward state in the flesh, *Philip. 2. 7.* but likewise to be, by divine providence, put to serve Heathens, and the worst of Heathens, that so the Lord may

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make



make them instrumental to do good to some of these.  
 2 *Cor.* 5. 2. 3. or convince them that God is with their  
 Servants, *Gen.* 31. 44. for here the Apostle supposes some  
 of the chosen Generation, and the peculiar People, to be  
 Servants to Heathens, and so froward and perverse  
 Heathens. 7. Although all that are without the saving  
 knowledge of God in Christ, be in a like damnable and  
 cursed estate, *Eph.* 2. 3. Yet there may be amongst them  
 much difference of disposition, some of them being of a  
 more bountifull and liberal temper, as the word, here  
 rendered *good*, may signifie, *Mat.* 20. 15: and less rigid  
 in exacting all that in strict justice they might, as the  
 word, translated *gentle*, doth import; others of them  
 more perverse and harder to have dealing with, accord-  
 ing to the signification of this word *froward*: which  
 difference, doth mainly flow from the Lord's various  
 dispensation of the gifts of nature, and his common in-  
 fluences for improving the same, according to His So-  
 veraign pleasure: for, here among wicked and heathen  
 Masters, there are some good and equitable, or moderate  
 to wit, in comparison of some others of them, and there  
 are others who are more perverse or *froward*. 8. The  
 wickednesse of those, to whom in God's providence  
 Christians are tied by any relation, doth not exempt  
 them from making conscience of the duties of that rela-  
 tion toward those to whom they are tied; the ground of  
 our duty, not being the qualification of the person to  
 whom we owe it, but the Command of God obliging  
 us to it: *Servants be subject to your Masters with all fear,*  
*not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward.*

Verf. 19. *For this is thank-worthy, if a man for conscience  
 towards God endure grief, suffering wrongfully.*  
*For what glory is it, if when ye be buffeted for your faults,*  
*ye shall take it patiently? but if when ye do well, and suffer  
 for it, ye take it patiently; this is acceptable with God.*

From this, to the end of the Chapter, the Apostle  
 bringeth

bringeth many afflictions, to press upon Christians servants; dutifulness to their Pagan-Masters, and patient suffering of injuries from them in following their duty to Christ. The first, is, That if they did, out of respect to Christ's command and glory, hold on in their duty, notwithstanding of hardest sufferings, He should graciously reward their so doing, as acceptable service to Him, *ver. 19.* The second is, That it would be a great disgrace for Christians to deserve by their miscarriage hard usage from Heathens; but, if they were faithful in their duty, and patient under sufferings for it, they might be sure of God's approbation, *ver. 20.* Hence *Laur.* 1. Although neither our doing, nor our suffering, can merit any thing at God's hand, it being wholly His grace (as the first expression, *ver. 19.* may be rendered from the Original) that enables us for both, *Philip. 1. 29.* Yet when His grace hath in some measure enabled us for both, He is pleased to esteem thereof, as if it were worthy of thanks from Him; and graciously to reward it: with a further increase of grace, and ability to do and suffer, *Mat. 25. 19.* with begun peace and consolation in the heart under sufferings for duty to Him, *2 Cor. 1. 3.* as earnest of the full reward which His grace is to bestow at last, *Rev. 3. 4, 5.* which ought to be a sufficient encouragement to the Godly in their duty against all their sufferings from men, for which end, it is held forth here: for, *This is thank-worthy*, or (as the Original may be rendered) *this is grace.* 2. God doth not so much respect the sufferings of Professors, even for Truth and Duty (seeing Hypocrites may attain thereto, *2 Cor. 13. 3.*) as He looks unto the principle and manner of their sufferings, whether they suffer because of their former engagements by profession, or otherwise; and because they desire to carry a name and esteem of religious persons to the end with them: or, whether they suffer out of conscience toward God, that is, in obedience to Him, who commands them to choose affliction rather than sin, and from a desire to please and honour Him, by bearing

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 Testimony to His Truth, by suffering: for, this suffering, and this only, is reckoned *thank-worthy*, if a man for conscience toward God, endure grief, suffering wrongfully.  
 3. Although the Lord sometimes keeps heaviness and grief off the spirits of his People under such sufferings, as are very heave and grievous in themselves, *Ait. 16. 25.* Yet, at other times, He sees it fitting, not only to exercise them with hard and unjust sufferings from men, but likewise with many sad weights upon their spirits under these sufferings, arising partly from the sight of God's dishonour by their enemies, *Psal. 42. 3.* and partly from the fear of their own miscarriage under their trials, *Joh. 14. 1.* together with their mis-belief of the Promise of their through-bearing and out-gate, *Psal. 116. 11.* both which exercises together, are sometimes necessary for the Godly, that they may be compleatly denied to their own strength and courage, and may be taught to depend on God for their through-bearing, *2 Cor. 1. 8. 9.* and therefore both exercises ought to be patiently submitted unto by them, in so far as they are for their trial and advantage, even as they would expect a reward from God: for, this is *thank-worthy*, if a man for conscience toward God, endure grief, suffering wrongfully.  
 4. Although it be the mark of Hypocrites to do all duties of Religion for respect to their own credit and glory before men, *Mat. 23. 5.* Yet the Lord allows His own People to have so much respect to their own credit, especially before the profane, as may provoke them to a tender and holy walking, and to eschew every thing that may disgrace them, and their holy Profession: for, this is here made an argument to duty, and patient suffering of wrongs, that if they neglected duty, and so were put to suffer for their miscarriage, That would be no glory, but rather a disgrace to them, and their Profession; for, *what glory is it, if when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently?*  
 5. As it hath pleased the Lord for the good of humane society, to leave in the minds, even of Heathens, some knowledge of what is contrary to His will, *Rom. 1. 14.*

15. and some inclination to punish the same. *Act. 23. 4.* So it is a very great disgrace to Christian Religion, when Heathens, or such as are like Heathens, void of the saving knowledge of God in Christ, may find Christians in those sins, which their light leads them to punish, especially, when Christians make their liberty by Christ a pretence and cloak to cover those sins: for, it is here imported by the Apostle, that Heathen Masters did not only know somewhat of their Servants duty, but also would justly punish them for neglect of it; and that, if Christian Servants did by their miscarriage deserve sufferings from such Masters; (as they were in hazard to do by abusing their christian liberty) this would prove a great disgrace to them, and to the Profession of Christianity: *for, what glory is it, if when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently?* 6. Although patience, under deserved strokes from men, be in it self commendable, and will prove persons to be accepted with God, when they accept the punishment of their iniquity, and flee to Christ for mercy, *Luke 23. 41.* Yet the patience of a Professor of Religion, under those strokes, which his own miscarriage hath justly procured from wicked men, will not remove his disgrace, nor the disgrace of his profession, nor be any glory to him, in comparison of what patience under sufferings for well-doing would be: for, this question, *What glory is it, if when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye take it patiently?* imports, that their sufferings for their faults, though never so patiently, would be no glory to them, to wit, in comparison of what it would be to suffer patiently for well-doing. 7. As none may expect that well-doing will exempt them from trouble and suffering; but rather that it will occasion and increase the same; So, the Lord's favour toward sufferers, and His acceptance of them, and of their sufferings as service to Him, should be thought a sufficient encouragement to patience under that lot, and should be often considered as a recompence of all the shame and pain of the crosse: for, with this encouragement, which the

Apostle

Apostle held forth, for the substance of it, in the beginning of the former Verse. he closes this Verse: *If when ye do well and suffer for it, ye take it patiently: this is acceptable with God.*

Verſ. 11. *For even servants were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps.*

Here are some further arguments, to presse upon Christians patient suffering for the Truth of Christ, and Duty to Him. The third, in number, is, That they were by the Gospel called to follow Christ with a crosse upon their back. The fourth is, That Christ hath in their room borne all the wrath that is due to them for their sins. And the fifth, is, That he hath left a sweet copy and patern of a right way of suffering for all His owne to imitate: and therefore they should hold on in their duty, notwithstanding of sufferings. Hence *Learn*, 1. As Christ's Followers are called by the Gospel, to enjoy a sweet fellowship with Him here, *1 Cor. 1. 9.* and to the obtaining of glory with Him hereafter, *2 Thess. 2. 14.* So, are they also called to endure a suffering lot in the world for following their duty to Him: for, to those who were suffering wrongfully for well-doing, the Apostle thus speaketh, *Even servants were ye called.* 2. Christ doth not hide this hard lot of suffering from His Followers, till they meet with it; but when first He invites them to engage with Him. He gives them fore-warning of the worst that may befall them in His service, that so they may not be offended at it when it comes, *Joh. 16. 1.* that they may give proof of their esteem of Him, by consenting to make up a crosse for Him, *Mat. 16. 37. 38.* and by their former consent to follow Him upon these terms, may be the more strongly engaged to adventure upon suffering for Him, *Joh. 11. 18. 2 Pet. 1. 14.* for, the Apostle brings this, as an argument to patient and joyful suffering, *that even servants were they called.* 3. *Joh.*

for Christ hath suffered in the pain and place of the Elect, so that none who are one with Him have any part of vindictive wrath to undergo, whatever fatherly displeasure they may be exercised with so humble them in the sense of sin, and wrath due to them, that so they may flee to Him, *R/sal. 39. 30. because Christ also hath suffered for us.* 4. Christ's suffering thus for Believers, doth strongly oblige and encourage them to suffer for Him, when they must either suffer, or sin against Him, seeing His sufferings for them, hath freed them from wrath, *Gal. 3. 13.* and made everlasting blessedness sure for them, *Rom. 8. 34. &c.* for, this is the Apostle's fourth argument, to suffer for well-doing, *because Christ also hath suffered for us.* 5. Although it be high presumption in any, to aim at imitation of Christ in these acts of His, which He did for satisfying the Father's justice for sinners, for proving of His Deity, and the like; it being altogether impossible to imitate Him in these, *Joh. 14. 29.* Yet Christians are bound so imitate Christ in these actions of His, which being in themselves moral, are purposely propounded in Scripture for Christians to imitate, such as meekness, *Mat. 23. 23.* humility, *Joh. 13. 12, 18.* self-denial, *Rom. 13. 2, 3.* and here, patient and constant suffering for well-doing: *Christ hath suffered for us, leaving us an example, that we should follow His steps.* 6. Although the best will still be far short of conformity to their pattern Christ Jesus, even in these things wherein they are to imitate Him, and in which some measure of conformity may be attained; Yet, ought we not so give over, but still aim at the next time to come nearer our copy, which is perfect in it self, and able to change those who by Faith look on it, *2 Cor. 3. 18.* for, there is a metaphor in the word here taken from an exact copy which is cast to Children, I whereunto they are still to study more conformity, though after many essays they be very unlike it: *leaving us an example that we should follow.* 7. John Christ hath ever call His Followers to stay and abide in His Service, but such as He hath used before

themselves, whose paths drop sanctity to them. *Phil.*  
*25. 11.* and who by His Spirit doth yet go along with  
them through the hardest. *Can. 4. 8.* for his steps, here  
spoken of, are both the several kinds of His sufferings  
from wicked men, which He went through, and the par-  
ticulars of the right way of suffering wherein we are to  
imitate Him, who hath left us an example that we should  
follow his steps.

**Vers 12.** Who did no sin, neither was guile found in His  
mouth.

**23.** Who when He was reviled, reviled not again, when He  
suffered, He threatened not, but committed Himself to Him  
that judgeth righteously.

The Apostle insists in commending Christ, as the Be-  
lievers copy, from three particulars: which may be ta-  
ken for so many further arguments to patient suffering  
for well-doing. The sixth, in order, taken from Christ's  
innocency, is, That seeing He who did not in the least  
offend either God or man, was handled as a sinner, His  
faithful Followers should therefore take well with suffer-  
ings. The seventh, taken from His patience, is, That  
since the Son of God, when foul crimes were laid to His  
charge, did not at all requite His slanderers, nor give  
the least ill word for the worst usage; therefore patience  
under injuries, without studying revenge, becomes His  
Followers. The eighth, taken from His Faith and Con-  
fidence, is, That seeing Christ did resign Himself to His  
righteous Father, to deal with Him, and His persecutors  
as He saw fitting, they that desire to be like Him, should  
take the same course. Hence *Lev. 1.* Christ Jesus our  
Mediator, was altogether free of the least transgression  
or defect in conformity to the Law of God, though  
the strongest of Satan's fiery darts were shot at Him,  
*Mat. 4. 1. 6.* and *16. 23. 23.* Yet His Bow abode in its  
strength, *Gen. 49. 24.* there being nothing in Him to be-  
lieve a temptation, *Job. 14. 30.* He being by His mi-  
raculous

ridiculous conception, exempted from the contagion of  
 Original sin, *John 1. 35.* whence actual transgressions  
 flow, *John 4. 1.* and is beloved Him to be so, that He  
 might be completely lovely to God, as being the sum  
 of all those spotless Lambs that were offered under the  
 Law, as types of Him, *Job 1. 20.* and that He might be  
 a perfect pattern of holiness to His Followers. *He did  
 no sin.* 2. There is nothing but truth and sincerity in all  
 the words of Christ. He never express more willingness  
 to receive and do good unto sinners, than He doth seem  
 really to make out to all that come to Him; neither He  
 express more wrath against lighters of Him, than they  
 shall find to be true, for, this is another branch of the  
 commendation of Christ from His innocency. *Neither  
 was guile found in His mouth.* 3. How should we love  
 the Children of the Lord, may be of those sinners, which  
 are unjustly charged upon them by persecutors, as the  
 cause of their sufferings; Yet, the sense of their sinfulness  
 in other things, ought to make them submissive, and  
 patient under hardest sufferings from men, considering  
 that they suffer for less than they deserve, *Eccl. 3. 13.* and  
 that it becomes them to bear indignations because they  
 have sinned, *Matt. 7. 9.* for, the Apostle, to prove the  
 innocency of Christ, who was a patient sufferer, as an  
 argument from the more to the less, to move sinfull  
 things not to take ill with sufferings, since Christ was a  
 patient sufferer, *who did no sin, &c.* 4. As all that would  
 glorifie the Lord by their sufferings, and have comfort  
 under them, must study to imitate Jesus Christ in His  
 innocency and sincerity; So, they that have attained to  
 the greatest measure of conformity to Him in these things  
 not therefore expect exemption from sad sufferings; but  
 rather, the liker to Him in these they are, to look for the  
 worse usage from wicked men; for, as Christ's innocency  
 and sincerity are here held forth as steps of Him,  
 which they that would honour Him by their sufferings,  
 and have comfort under them, must follow; So He is  
 here held forth as exposed to extreme grievous sufferings,



inexorably withstanding He had these in His perfection, *He did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: yet He was rebuffed, and put on hardest sufferings.* 5. It was the lot of our Lord Jesus when He was in our place, in the estate of His humiliation, not only to suffer hard things in His Person, but likewise in His Name; to have that room and torn with reproaches, and to have foul crimes (as the word here, rendered *in rebuffs*, signifies) unjustly laid to His charge, such as compliance with Satan, *Job. 1. 10. 20.* blasphemy, *Job. 10. 33.* sedition, *Luke 23. 2.* and the like: and that because though He never did any thing worthy of blame, He stood in the room of many sinners really guilty of all these crimes, which were only upon Him by imputation; so as He bear the curse of God, and the shame of the world, that was due to these sinners; for this lot where supposed to have been Christ's, that He not only suffered, but was *hated*. 6. While our Lord Jesus was under this lot, He did not give a meeting of any kind to His enemies, but was so far from charging them with foul crimes initially, which He received when they had done so to Him, calling Him a Devil, *Job. 2. 9.* He did not at that time so much as repeat the challenge, which He had before justly laid on their charge, *Job. 2. 4.* and though He did sometimes threaten fearful judgments upon despisers of reconciliation with God through Him, *Mat. 23. 13, 14.* Yet upon receiving of greatest personal wrongs, He did not so much as renew any of these threatenings, but on the contrary prayed for his enemies, *Luke 23. 34.* left in the misapprehension of any onlookers, His sufferings might have been stained with imputation of passion or revenge, and his followers might have abused his practice to vent their carnal passion against their persecutors; the history whereof is likewise imported in the Apostle's guarding this as best in *1 Pet. 2. 23.* when He was reviled, we would not repay evil for evil, He suffered, He endured it. 7. An all Christ's followers should resolve to meet with grievous reproaches and slanders, joyous with their other sufferings, as Christ did.

did, So ought they to follow Christ's steps, in not requiring their enemies, or giving ill language for the worst usage, but must learn to die to their reputation as well as to other things, for His sake, *who when He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered, he threatened not;*  
 8. While Christ our Lord was suffering in our room. He did with much confidence and willingness deliver Himself up to the will of his righteous Father, to endure the utmost that was due to sinners; according to his undertaking in the Covenant of Redemption, *Ps. 40. 7, 8.* knowing that his Father's righteousness was engaged in the same Covenant, to sustain his Manhead under all his sufferings, *Isa. 53. 7, 8.* to reward Him for them, by giving Him all that He died for, as his seed, to serve him, and praise him for ever, *Isa. 53. 10, 11.* and to punish all the rest according to their deserving, *Ps. 120. 5, 6.* for, this is here expressly asserted as the ground of the patience and submission of the man Christ to the Father's will, *He committed himself to Him that judgeth righteously.*  
 9. Although these acts of Faith which do necessarily presuppose guiltiness, or have with them any mixture of mis-belief or discouragement, could not be in Christ, who was holy, harmlesse, undefiled, and separated from sinners, *Heb. 7. 26.* Yet His Soul was eminently endued with the grace of Faith, as it is taken for resting upon the faithfulness of God, and resignation of one's person, and cause to Him under unjust sufferings from men: for, thus is Christ here, as a Believer, described, *He committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously.*  
 10. The oppressed and suffering People of God, who are not able to defend themselves from wrongs at men's hands, nor to redress the same, ought to commit themselves and their cause to God their Father, as to a righteous Judge, not out of malice against, or desire of judgment upon their persecutors, but as a mean to prevent their own despondency of spirit, and despair under their hard usage; for, this practice of Christ's is one of his steps which suffering Christians ought to follow: *He committed himself*

to Him that judgeth righteously. 11. The best way for Christians to attain to true christian patience under a crosse for Christ, to keep down their carnal passions, while they suffer wrongfully from men, and to guard their hearts against the study of revenge toward their persecutors, is, to resign themselves, and their cause, in the hands of God the righteous Judge: for, though there was no hazard of such sinfull motions in Christ, yet He took that course which He knew would be most effectual to prevent them in his Followers, whom He would have to follow his steps in this, as a mean to keep them down; *When he was reviled, he reviled not again &c. but committed himself to Him that judgeth righteously.*

Verf. 24. *Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we being dead to sin, should live unto righteousness; by whose stripes ye were healed.*

The Apostle repeareth, and enlargeth his fourth argument (it being the sweetest and strongest of all the rest) to presse patient suffering for well-doing, to wit, That since Christ hath borne the weight of our sins, by enduring the wrath due to us for them in his own Person upon the crosse, how patiently should his Redeemed Ones, bear light afflictions for his sake? And withal, he adds some further arguments to presse the same point, taken from the sweet ends of Christs death, and the advantages Believers have thereby. The ninth in number, is, That the very end of Christs death, being to purchase vertue for the slaying of sin in his own, and for quickning them to the duties of holinesse, it doth become all his Redeemed Ones to follow their duty, without desire of revenge upon those who put them to suffer wrongfully. The tenth, is, That seeing the Redeemed by Christ have spiritual and eternal health and welfare, by vertue of those wounds which he received from God, and men, for them; therefore they ought not to take in evil part, wounds

wounds and stripes from men, for following their duty to him. Hence *Learn*, 1. Christ's suffering in the room of the Redeemed, is a subject that they should not soon weary to think and speak of, it being to them a ground of much patience and comfort under their sufferings, to consider, that God cannot now be avenging himself upon them for their sins, who are fled to Christ, nor taking satisfaction to his justice at their hands, he having received it already from Christ: Therefore, the Apostle, having held forth Christ's sufferings, *ver.* 21. as an argument to constancy in duty, notwithstanding of persecution from men, he loveth to come over the same argument here again. *Who his own self bare our sins, &c.* 2. The sufferings of Christ were not only exemplary, that we might have a copy how to carry our selves right under our sufferings, but they were expiatory of our sins, and satisfactory for them to the Father's justice; for, after the Apostle had set forth Christ in the former words, as casting us a copy of the right way of suffering, lest any should think that to be his greatest design in suffering, he addeth this, *Who his own self bare our sins in his own body*, 3. Jesus Christ our Mediatour, who was altogether free of any guiltiness inherent in himself (as was cleared from *vers.* 22.) had all the sins of the Elect upon him by imputation, and was handled by divine justice, as if he had been guilty of them all, as is imported in this expression, *He bare our sins*, which frequently in Scripture signifies, to bear the punishment of sin; See *Lev.* 20. 17, 20. *Ezek.* 23. 49. 4. As sin is to a waking conscience one of the heaviest burdens that ever was felt, *Psal.* 38. 4. So Jesus Christ hath by his satisfaction upon the crosse, lifted up (as the word here signifieth) that weight from off the conscience of those, who feel as much of it as chases them to him for ease, so as it shall never presse any such down to hell, or to despair: for, the Apostle speaketh of his own sins, and the sins of other penitent and believing sinners, as a weight that none but Christ was able to lift, and which he hath lifted up and born, *Who his*

*own self bare our sins.* 5. That the second Person of the blessed Trinity might be fit to bear our sins, he behoved to be incarnate, and to take on a true body, not borrowed, or assumed for a time; but a body of his own, which with his soul being personally united to his Godhead, he will keep for ever and ever, that his conversing in Heaven with his Creatures that have bodies may be the more sweet: for, *he bare our sins in his own body.* 6. Although the principal part of Christ's sufferings for us, was in his soul, *Lsa. 53. 10. Mat. 26. 38.* Yet, he is said to bear our sins in his body, not only because that is an ordinary designation of the whole Person, consisting of soul and body; but because it is most wonderful that ever the Son of God should have assumed so frothy a being, as a body of flesh; because his bodily sufferings did visibly represent his love to sinners, and the desert of sin; and because his soul suffered only while it was in his body before his death: therefore the Apostle saith, *He bare our sins in his body.* 7. Our Mediarour behoved to be put to a painfull, lingering, and shamefull death, because he was in the room of many who deserve such kind of deaths, even by humane Laws, that he might the better illustrate the terror of God against sin, and might take the sting out of such kind of deaths to any of his own, who should endure the like for his sake; for these causes *he bare our sins in his own body on the tree,* to wit, of the crosse. 8. That which doth most heighten our esteeme of Christ's love, in giving himself to die for us, and most strongly oblige us not to spare our persons for him, is the consideration of the excellency of his Person, and of our unworthinesse for whom he suffered; both which the Apostle leads Believers unto here, while he doth so often mention him and us, *Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, &c.* 9. Till the merit of Christ's death be applyed by Faith to the hearts of sinners, they are alive to sin, being active, and delighting in the commission thereof; they are dead to righteousness, being no lesse impotent for any spiritual act, or  
 holy

holy performances, than dead men are for the actions of the living; as is supposed in this. That Christ's death was for *double ends*; *that he being dead to sin, might live to righteousness*. 10. Christ's intention in dying for sinners, which he doth in some measure gain in all his Redeemed Ones in this life; and will fully attain in the other; was, That the love of sin in their hearts, might by the vertue purchased with his blood, be so weakened, that they might have no more pleasure in the continuation of it, than dead men have in the delights of the living, and that their hearts might be quickened with spiritual life, for holy performances, and they might live eternally praising their Redeemer for that righteousness of his bestowed upon them, whereby they are justified, sanctified, and saved: for, these two are here made the great ends of Christ's death; *that he being dead (to wit, being made so in a spiritual sense by the vertue of Christ's death) to sin, might live unto righteousness*. 11. As every man in his natural state, before the application of the vertue of Christ's blood to his soul, is in no less dangerous and deadly a condition, than a man that is wounded and bleeding to death; *Luke 10. 30* which is not to be understood, as if such had any spiritual life at all, but that while they live naturally, they are altogether dead spiritually, and posting toward eternal death, as a man bleeding in his wounds is to his natural death; So, it is only the vertue purchased by Christ's sufferings that brings true health to sinners, which consisteth in the pardoning of their sins, *1/a. 33. 24* the curing of their spiritual distempers, *T/sol. 103. 3*, and enabling them like healthy men to go about spiritual performances, *1/a. 33. 6*. for, it is here supposed that sinners are naturally in a deadly condition, and that there is no health for them, but from Christ's sufferings, by *what spirit ye are saved*. 12. Although we ought to conceive nothing of Christ's body now glorified, but only any way in our apprehension stain the incomprehensible glory and beauty thereof, *Philip 3. 21*. Yet so they were the wounds that Christ

received from the Father's justice, that we may safely conceive the impression of them to be no lesse bidding in his heart, for the entertaining of sympathy with his Redeemed Ones, (who are wounded in their consciences with the lenie of sin, and fear of wrath, or, in their bodies, by stripes from men for their faithfulness to Him) than if He had yet in his body the print of those wounds to move his sympathy towards them: for, the word here, signifieth the bidding print, or skar of a wound after it is healed; *By whose stripes ye were healed.* 13. None can with patience and chearfulness suffer wrongs for Christ, but they that do by faith apply the vertue of his suffering for them to their own souls; for the pardoning and subduing of sin, quickening of their hearts in holinesse, and healing of their spiritual distempers; which effects of his death, are so sweet to them that partake of them, that they cannot but chearfully endure the worst that men can do against them, rather than do the least thing that may be offensive to Him, *Who his own self bear our sins in his own body on the tree, that we being dead unto sin, might live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.* All which the Apostle sets down as so many motives to constancy in well-doing, notwithstanding of hardest sufferings.

*Verf. 25. For ye were as sheep going astray, but are now returned unto the Shepberd and Bishop of your souls.*

The last argument to press upon Believers, patient suffering of wrongs for Christ, and their duty to Him, is taken from that blessed change, which by the vertue of his death is made upon them: and this the Apostle sets forth in two branches. The one, containing the woful case they were in before Conversion, to wit, That they were then wandering in their ignorance and sinful wayes, to their own destruction, like straying sheep: The other, holds forth the blessed state they are now brought to, to wit, That by the powerful grace of Christ put forth in their conversion, they are brought back to Him the good Shep-  
berd

herd and Overseer of their souls; and therefore they ought to follow Him, and their duty, notwithstanding of any hardship they can meet with in that way. Hence *Learn, 1.* Before conversion, the Elect, as well as others, are wandering toward their own destruction, unable to bring themselves into the right way, and in hazard to be preyed upon by the roaring Lion: which condition is fitly set out by this similitude, which the Apostle here makes use of from *Isa. 53. 6. It were as sheep going astray.*

2. True conversion is that change which Christ worketh upon sinners, whereby they are made not only to turn their back upon their former sinful courses, but also to betake themselves to Jesus Christ, seeking to enjoy his favour and fellowship, submitting to Him, as their Ruler and Guide, and resigning themselves to be at his disposal: for, so the Apostle here describes *It were as sheep going astray, but are now returned to the Shepherd.*

3. This blessed change which is made upon sinners in conversion, is that which doth evidence to them that they have received the healing vertue which flows from the wounds of Christ to his Redeemed Ones; None else can esteem themselves healed by his stripes, but those that find themselves brought back from their former sinful courses, and made to follow Him as their Leader: for, after the Apostle had said, *by his stripes ye were healed*, he addeth this, as the evidence thereof, *for ye were as sheep going astray, but are now returned to the Shepherd.*

4. Those whom Christ's powerfull grace hath thus turned toward Him, shall find Him prove himself to them a good and faithful Shepherd, and Ruler, as the word also signifieth, reclaiming them from their wanderings, not only before their conversion, *Luke 15. 4.* but likewise after it, *Psal. 119. 176.* providing plenty of wholsom food for them as his flock, *Psal. 23. 1, &c.* tenderly leading, and bearing them in his bosom, in their sick and weak conditions, *Isa. 40. 6.* and so protecting and defending them, that none can pluck them out of his hand, *Joh. 10. 28.* for, He to whom they are returned, is, *the Shepherd of their souls.*



5. It is not any one relation among the creatures that can sufficiently set out what Jesus Christ will prove himself to be unto true Converts, all the usefulness and sweetness which is but scattered among all the relations which one creature hath to another, being but shadows of what he is to them that are truly turned to Him: for, the Apostle saith, they are returned to Him, who is not only their Shepherd, but their *Bishop*, or Overseer, who foresees and guards them against hazards, so far as is fitting; and furnisheth them with all necessary provision in his service, and so proves himself *the Bishop*, or Overseer, of their souls. 6. As the Believers outward man, and the least thing that doth concern the same, is cared for, and respected by Jesus Christ, *Mat. 10. 30.* So, He loveth to commend his respect, and oversight to them, mainly in reference to their souls, which are their better part: the welfare whereof necessarily bringeth along with it the welfare of the body; and, their souls being beyond peril. That may make them cheerfully adventure upon bodily hazards in following Him. *Who is the Shepherd and Bishop of their souls.* 7. That which engageth the hearts of sinners to love Jesus Christ, and out of love to Him, to follow their duty through hardest sufferings, is the frequently renewed sense of their woful condition wherein sometimes they were, and of the blessedness and priviledges of that state whereunto his grace hath brought them: for, after the Apostle had represented this change to them, *ver. 9, 10.* as a motive to holiness, he doth here hold it forth again as a motive to constancy in holiness, notwithstanding of sufferings; *For ye were as sheep going astray, but are now returned to the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.*

CHAP. III.

**T**His Chapter hath three parts: In the first, containing the duties of married persons, the Apostle presseth upon Christian Women, first, That they should make conscience of duty to their Husbands, though they were Pagans, that so they might be gained to fall in love with Christianity, *ver. 1.* by the sight of their chaste and religious carriage, *ver. 2.* Secondly, That they should not be much taken up with trimming of their bodies, *ver. 3.* But, thirdly, That their prime care should be to have their souls adorned with grace, especially, meekness: because, 1. that's an ornament durable: and, 2. it's in high esteem with God, *ver. 4.* So should they resemble holy Women recorded in Scripture, *ver. 5.* and prove themselves heirs of *Sarah's* blessedness, *ver. 6.* Next, he exhorteth Husbands to a wife and tender walking toward them, by some arguments, *ver. 7.*

In the second part, he exhorteth all Christians, whatever their relations be, to the exercise of such graces and duties of holiness as serve for keeping up a comfortable communion among themselves, and with the Lord, *ver. 8.* and dissuadeth them from some evils that might mar the same: Because, first, they were all called to inherit the same blessedness, *ver. 9.* And, secondly, because a holy walking with God, and a peaceable carriage toward others, is the only way to sweeten the lives of Christians under all their troubles, *ver. 10, 11.* Thirdly, that, that was the way to have God's favourable providence watching over them for good. Fourthly, to get acceptance to their prayers. And, fifthly, to eschew his wrath, *ver. 12.*

The third part, containeth several motives to constancy in holiness, and encouragements against suffering in that way: As, first, that well-doing was the way to ward off the evil of all their troubles, *ver. 13.* Secondly

ly, that no trouble for well-doing should hinder, but rather promote their blessednesse: to which encouragements the Apostle subjoyneth six directions, for attaining a right carriage under suffering. First, that they should labour to banish the fear of flesh, *ver. 14.* Secondly, that they should adore the holinesse of God in carving out a suffering lot for them. Thirdly, that they should timously enrich themselves with the knowledge of the Truth, so as they might be able to give a reason of what they suffered for. Fourthly, that they should manifest meeknesse toward their persecutors. And, fifthly, entertain fear of their own miscarriage, *ver. 15.* Sixthly, that they should labour still to keep a good conscience under their suffering, so should their carriage convince and make ashamed their very persecutors, which is their third encouragement *ver. 16.* Fourthly, that their sufferings after this manner, should prove much more comfortable to them, than if they were procured by their own miscarriage. Fifthly, that the good will of God had the carving out of these sufferings, *ver. 17.* Sixthly, that innocent Jesus Christ had suffered to the death for reconciling them to God, and for the applying of his purchase, was raised by the power of his Spirit or Godhead, *ver. 18.* Seventhly, that there are many souls now imprisoned in Hell, for slighting such Truths as Christ's Spirit speaking through *Noah*, and others of his Servants, had prest upon them, *ver. 19. 20.* Eighthly, that the spiritual safety of Believers from the deluge of Gods wrath was made no lesse sure to them by their Baptism, and the work of Christ's Spirit with it, than the temporal safety of *Noah*, and those few persons with him, from the floud, was made sure to them by the Ark, *ver. 21.* And, ninthly, that their Surety is now in highest power and glory, that he may beat them through all their troubles, and possesse them in that salvation, which he hath purchased for them, *ver. 22.* All which prove, that Believers ought to follow their duty to him, notwithstanding of all sufferings for him.

Veri.

*Verf. 1. Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands, that if any obey not the Word, they also may without the Word be won by the conversation of the wives:*

*2. While they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear.*

**T**HE Apostle, being to point out the duties of married persons, he beginneth with, and insisteth most upon the duties of the Women, partly, because they had most discouragements; and partly, because their making conscience of their duty was the best means to provoke their Husbands to their duty. Upon them he presseth subjection, or dutifulness to their Husbands, by two arguments: The first is, Because their obligation to their duty was no less strait, than the obligation of others who stood in any of those relations, mentioned in the former Chapter. The second is, Because their unbelieving Husbands might, through Gods blessing, be moved to receive the Gospel, which formerly they had rejected, *Ver. 1.* providing, they did mark nothing but chastity and holiness, joyned with the fear of God, and reverence toward themselves, shining in the conversation of the Wives, *Ver. 2.* And therefore Christian Women had reason to make conscience of duties, even toward their Pagan-Husbands. Hence *Learn, 1.* They that would rightly divide the Word of Truth among the Lord's People, must not content themselves to presse the duties of holiness in general, as they concern all Christians, but must learn in their Doctrine to come down to the lowest relations that are among the Lord's People, and to point out the particular duties of these, it being in the discharge of such duties mainly that Religion is adorned, *1st. 2. 10.* Therefore, the Apostle, after he hath spoken at large of the duties of holiness, belonging to all in general, he comes, among other relations, to point out the duties of wives to their husbands; *Likewise, ye wives, be subject, &c. 2.* The sum of a Womans duty to her Husband, is sub-

jection.

4. *Coloss. 3. 18.* *Ye wives, be subject to your own husbands.* 1. This is a  
 section, which doth consist in a reverend esteem of him,  
 as of one placed by the Lord in a degree of superiority  
 above her, which will produce reverent speaking of him,  
 and to him her. 5. and in giving obedience to his com-  
 mands in things lawfull, both which are in the signifi-  
 cation of this word, whereby the Apostle expresseth the  
 whole duty of Wives to their Husbands, *Likewise, ye*  
*wives, be subject to your own husbands.* 2. However there  
 be difference among those relations that are betwixt the  
 Lord's People, some of them having more of dominion  
 and subjection in them, as those last mentioned in the  
 former Chapter, betwixt Magistrates and Subjects, Ma-  
 sters and Servants, others of them having more of equal-  
 ity and love in them, as this which is here betwixt Hus-  
 band and Wife; Yet, the obligation to the duties of the  
 latter sort is no less strict, than to the duties of the for-  
 mer, both being enjoined by the same authoritie, and so  
 to be made conscience of upon the same hazard: There-  
 fore the Apostle presseth the duty of Women to their  
 Husbands by such an expression, as imports a like strict-  
 nesse of eye upon them to their duty; as was upon those  
 mentioned in the last part of the former Chapter, *Like-*  
*wise, ye wives, be subject, &c.* 4. The wickednesse and  
 disobedience to the Gospel of any married person, how-  
 ever it may draw themselves under the curse of God, Yet  
 it doth neither loose the relation, nor exempt the other  
 party from their duty (excepting in the case of Adultery,  
 and lawful divorce thereupon, *Mat. 5. 32.* or wilful de-  
 fection, *2 Cor. 7. 15.*) but doth rather eye the better party  
 the more strictly to a conscionable discharge of that du-  
 ty, for the conviction or gaining of the other party: for,  
 though the Apostle here doth suppose Husbands, some  
 of them at least, to be disobedient to the Word, Yet, he  
 presseth upon their Wives, dutifulnesse to them, as to their  
 own Husbands: *Be in subjection to your own husbands, as*  
*the Church is to the Word, &c.* 5. Although the publick  
 Ministry of the Word, be the ordinary and principal  
 mean of sinners conversion to the Lord, *Rom. 10. 14. 15.*  
 Yet



spiritual policy and skill, as the same word also signifieth; *That if any they not the Word, &c., they may be won.* 9. There is no part of a Christians conversation so prevalent to gain on-lookers to fall in love with Religion, as that wherein the duties which we owe to others, in the relation we have to them, doth shine: for these two, *chastity* (which in the peculiar signification of it, is one main duty of the Wife in reference to her Husband) and *fear*, (signifying reverence to a superiour, *Rom. 13. 7.*) are the qualities of a christian conversation, which the Spirit of God here condescends upon, as most prevalent for gaining unbelievers to fall in love with Religion; *They may be won, while they behold your chaste conversation, coupled with fear.* 10. Carnal men do very accurately pry into all the secrets of the practice of those that are religious, which through it be done by them, that they may find occasion against the Godly, *Psal. 56. 6.* who should therefore be the more circumspect, *Psal. 39. 1.* and the more earnest for God's teaching, *Psal. 27. 11.* Yet the Lord may make use of it contrary to their intention, to be a mean of much good to their souls: for, the word which the Apostle uses here, *while they behold*, signifieth very accurately to pry into, and seriously to consider a thing: upon which, the Apostle may be safely conceived to lay some weight for moving Christian Women to the more holy circumspection in their carriage, which the Lord might blesse for gaining of their Husbands, *While they behold your chaste conversation.* 11. There is no true purity or holiness of conversation, which doth not flow from fear of offending God in the heart, by which Christians depart from evil in their practice, *Prov. 16. 6.* Nor is there any true fear of God in the heart, where the conversation is not in some measure holy, *Jer. 32. 40.* for, though this chastity and fear, of Christian Women here spoken of, may be taken with a respect to their Husbands, Yet the words are of a more extensive signification, and must necessarily include holiness of life, and fear of offending God in the heart, what

ever they might differ from their Husbands, the one  
whereof cannot be separated from the other, *A chaste  
conversation, coupled with fear.*

Verſ. 3. *Whose adorning, let it not be that outward adorning  
of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting  
on of apparel:*

4. *But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in the which  
is not corruptible, even the ornaments of a meek and gentle  
spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.*

The Apoſtle giveth here two further directions to be-  
lieving Women for attaining to ſuch a converſation, as  
through the Lord's bleſſing, might prove a mean of gain-  
ing their unbelieving Husbands: The one is negative,  
that they ſhould not be too curious, and ſuperfluous, in  
trimming their outward man. The other is poſitive, that  
their great pains ſhould be to have their inward man  
adorned with the grace of God, eſpecially meekneſſe and  
peaceableneſſe of ſpirit, in reference to their Husbands,  
and the Lord's diſpenſation in tying them to ſuch men,  
and to a croſſe with them: which laſt he preſſeth by two  
arguments, The firſt is, that this was an ornament that  
would not wax old as others do. The ſecond is, that it is  
in very high eſteem with the Lord, and therefore as they  
deſired to gain their husbands by their outward carriage,  
their great care ſhould be to attain to a right frame of  
ſpirit within. Hence *Learn*, 1. Even the Children of  
the Lord are in hazard to offend Him and others, in the  
matter of their apparel, while they labour not to have  
the ſame ſuitable to their ſeveral ranks and conditions,  
which God would have diſtinguiſhed in ſome meaſure  
by apparel, *Eſay*, 5. 1. *Gen*, 38. 14. while they ſeek a  
newneſſe and ſtrangenelle, whether in the kind of their  
apparel, or in their way of uſing of it, *2 Cor*, 1. 2. and  
when much time and expences are waſted about ſuch  
things, as are imported in the Apoſtle's words, *Heb*, 12. 1.  
which, and the like caſes, the Lord's People are bound to



offend in the matter of their apparel; and thus because there is in them much unblinded pride and vanity ready to manifest it self that way, *Iſa.* 3. 16, 18, &c. and because they forget, that apparel is given to make them ashamed in remembrance of their sin, *1 Tim.* 2. 9, 14. For, the hazard of offending (by wasting both time and means) is imported in this dissuasive of the Apostle; *Whose adorning, let it not be that outward adorning, of plating the hair, and wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel.* 2. Although the Lord allow persons who are in eminency above others, to have ornaments beyond necessity, *Iſa.* 62. 20, 21, 22. and others to have more than ordinary at some special occasions, *Gen.* 24. 30. and all of his People to provide for things honest in the sight of all men, *Rom.* 12. 17. Yet, when any Professor of Religion becomes excessive in the use of his liberty in these things, he will be so far from commending Religion to others thereby, that his practice will rather be a hindrance unto others to fall in love with it, who may, or will readily take occasion thence, to think that Christians have no better things to take them up, than these whereupon they waste their times, pains and means: for, from this evil the Apostle here dissuades Christian Women, as they would gain their Heathen Husbands; importing, that their vanity and excess in the matter of their apparel, would rather hinder them, than gain them to fall in love with Christianity; *Whose adorning, let it not be that outward adorning, of plating the hair, &c.* 3. They that would by their outward carriage, commend Religion, and win others to fall in love therewith, must have their prime care exercised about their heart, which, if it be adorned with the graces of God's Spirit in life and practice, the conversation cannot but be lovely to all rightly discerning on-lookers: for, the Apostle, having told those believing Women before, that it was their conversation mainly which would gain their Husbands, he now reprehendeth even the way of attaining to such a conversation, *Whose adorning, let it not be that outward adorning,*

*adorned with, but let it be the hidden man of the heart.*

4. Those that wast much time, pains and means, in decking and trimming of their bodies, do ordinarily neglect their souls, leaving these in a disorderly, sordid and filthy condition: for the Apostle, dissuading from the one, and (in opposition thereto) perswading to the other, importeth the inconsistency of such an adorning of the outward man, with the adorning of the inward: *Whose adorning, let it not be that outward adorning, ore, but let it be the hidden man of the heart.* 5. The Lord

hath been pleased to hide the hearts of every one, from the knowledge of another, who therefore ought not by their rash judging, and censuring of the inward frame and state of others, to invade the Lord's prerogative of searching the heart, *Jer. 17. 10.* but ought to bestow much pains, for keeping in a right frame their own hearts, which are hid from all eyes but God's, as a prime evidence of their sincerity. *Psal. 51. 6. 7.* Therefore the inward frame of the spirit is here called, *The hidden man of the heart.* 6. That which mainly makes the carriage of a Professor of Religion a mean to gain others to Jesus Christ, is, the exercise of the graces of God's Spirit within, especially meekness and quietness of spirit; by the former whereof, (to wit, meekness) they keep down their passions from rising against others that wrong them, or against the Lord's dispensation in correcting them more hardly than others, *Numb. 12. 2. 3.* where-

by also they essay all amicable and loving wayes of reclaiming such as do wrong them, before they go to the rigor of justice, *1 Cor. 4. 21.* and by the latter, (to wit, quietness of spirit) they do eschew all needlesse contradiction of others, *Isa. 53. 7.* all rashness in their actions, *Ab. 19. 36.* all meddling with things not belonging to them, *1 Thess. 4. 11.* and all expressions of uncontent with that lot which the Lord hath carved out to them, *Psal. 134. 2.* All which are here required of Christian Women, that count believing and pious Husbands, as special means of gaining them to Christ: for, in order

to their gaining, the Apostle thus exhorteth the Wives to put on the ornament of *a meek and quiet spirit*. 7. Where such a gracious frame of spirit is within, as the Apostle here exhorteth Christian Women to labour for, it will have visible effects that may be discerned without: for, the Apostle exhorteth Christian Wives to the study of meeknesse and quietnesse of spirit, as a mean to gain their unbelieving Husbands, which it could not prove, except the effects thereof were visible in their carriage. 8. The grace of Christ is such an ornament, as being once put upon the soul, doth never altogether fade or wax old; The consideration whereof should make Christians more careful to have it in exercise in their hearts, than to have on the best of their ornaments which will soon wear and wax old: for, as an argument to move Christians to put on this adorning of Gods grace, the Apostle affirms it to be that *which is incorruptible*. 9. Although every grace be the Lords own free gift; *1 Jam. 1. 17.* and the most Gracious cannot properly be profitable to Him, *Job 22. 2.* Yet, He is pleased to esteeme of his own grace, and graciously to reward the persons to whom He gives it, as if it were of much worth to Him; The consideration whereof, should heighten the esteeme of grace in our hearts, and quicken us to pains for getting and increasing of it: for this end is this adorning of a meek and quiet spirit here commended from this, *that it is in the sight of God of great price.*

*Vers. 5. For after this manner in the old time, the holy women also who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands.*

*6. Even as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him, Lord, whose daughters ye are as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement.*

Here are two further arguments, whereby the Apostle presseth upon Christian Women the study of such a carriage, as might prove a mean of gaining their wicked Hus-

Husbands; The one is taken from the example of holy believing Women, registered in Scripture, who counted it their best ornament to manifest their holiness and faith, by their dutifulness to their Husbands; and particularly of *Sarah*, who testified her obedience to her Husband, by her respectful and reverend language to him: The other argument, is from the advantage of such a carriage, that if they did imitate these holy Women, especially *Sarah*, in dutifulness to their Husbands, notwithstanding of any terror from them, they should prove themselves heirs of *Sarah's* blessedness. Hence *Learn*, 1. The Children of the Lord have not only need of precepts to press their duty upon them, but likewise of the examples of others held forth to them, who have gone before them in the practice of these duties, that so they may apprehend them feasible, seeing others have attained to them; and sweet, seeing others have cheerfully practised them; and the neglect of them hazardous, since these who have made conscience of them, may be brought as witnesses against the neglecters of them: Therefore after the Apostle hath pressed, by precepts and reasons, the duty of believing Women to their Husbands, he here beareth in the same further by the example of the *Saints*; for, after this manner also, the holy Women in the old time, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection to their own husbands. 2. The approved examples of the most eminent of the *Saints*, making conscience of moral duties, which are registered in the Old Testament, are obligatory under the New to the meanest of Believers in Christ, who are not by their Christian liberty freed from imitating them in these: for, here the Apostle presseth upon Christian Women, dutifulness to their Husbands, from the example of holy Women under the Old Testament, and particularly *Sarah*, who was an eminent, and, in some respects, an extraordinary person; for, after this manner also, the holy Women also, even as *Sarah*, &c. 3. There is no true holiness, which hath not Faith in God for its foundation.

and rock of it, whereby the heart relieth on God for assistance for the duties of holiness; and encouragement against difficulties in the way thereof; Nor, is there any real trusting in God, which hath not for the fruit thereof, holiness, consisting in the study of abstinence from every known sin, and endeavour after every known duty: for, from these two jointly are those ancient Believers described, as examples to be imitated by others; *Holy Women, who trusted in God.* 4. True holiness and faith in God are mainly evidenced in the particular duties of these relations, wherein the Lord's Providence hath placed his People; the conscionable discharge whereof, doth prove the principal ornament of Professors: for, here the Apostle sets forth those ancient believing Women, as in their best ornaments, while they are evidencing their holiness, and trusting in God, by their dutifulness to their Husbands, to be imitated by Christian Women under the Gospel; *The holy Women who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection to their Husbands.* 5. The Lord takes notice of the least act of sincere obedience to his Commands, even when it is mixed with many sinful failings, which he passeth in penitents, and would not have any of his People cast at any good in others, nor be the less careful to imitate it, that they do discern much miscarriage joyned with it: for, in that passage of *Sarah, Gen. 18. 12.* which is here related to, there are many sinful failings, and little thing commendable, beside that one word, evidencing her reverence to her Husband, which the Lord here registreth for her commendation and others imitation, hiding the faults that were therewith; *Even as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him, Lord.* 6. The want of these qualifications in parties to whom the Lord's People have relation, which have been eminent in others, doth not exempt them from these duties, which by vertue of that relation have been performed to others, endued with these qualifications: for, here the Apostle, from *Sarah's* reverencing of *Abraham*, an extraordinary and eminently gracious

many

man, in respect upon Christian Women, reverence on their  
 wicked infidel Husbands; *Even as Sarah obeyed Abraham,*  
*calling him, Lord.* 7. When we obtain grace from the  
 Lord, to follow the footsteps of the Saints, registered in  
 Scripture, especially in the faithful discharge of the du-  
 ties of our particular stations and relations, then do we  
 prove our selves to be partakers of the same spiritual pri-  
 viledges with them, and heirs of the same eternal blef-  
 sednesse which they now possess; for, as those who imi-  
 tate the faith and obedience of *Abraham*, are for that cal-  
 led his children, *Rom. 4. 11, 12. Gal. 3. 7. 9. 29.* So  
 these Women here, who imitate *Sarah* in well-doing,  
 particularly, in obedience to their Husbands, are called  
 her daughters, *Whose daughters ye are as long as ye do well,*  
 which is not to be understood, as if they were cast out of  
 the number of her daughters for every short-coming in  
 their duty, but that it is in the way of their duty, that  
 they will clear to themselves their right to her blessedness,  
 and enjoy the sense of their interest in the spiritual pri-  
 viledges which she had. 8. They that resolve to hold  
 on in the way of well-doing, may resolve to meet with  
 as much of terror and affrightment therein, as wicked  
 men can make them; yea, even from those of their nearest  
 relations, whose enmity against godliness, before the  
 Lord change them, is greater, than any natural affection  
 they have to those they are most strictly tied unto: for,  
 it is mainly against the terror and amazement of wicked  
 Husbands, that the Apostle here guards Christian Wo-  
 men, encouraging them by this, that they should prove  
 themselves daughters of *Sarah*, if they held on in their  
 duty, *and were not afraid of any amazement.* 9. It is per-  
 severance in the way of duty, when there is not only  
 small appearance of successe, but much sensible oppo-  
 sition from wicked men in following of it, which mainly  
 cleareth to Believers their right to the heavenly inheri-  
 tance; for this the Apostle stillth upon Christian Wo-  
 men, as that which would prove them daughters of  
*Sarah*; that is, to bein with her of the heavenly

ricance, if they did shall, and were not afraid of any  
amusement.

*Verf. 7. Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according  
to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife as unto the  
weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of  
life, that your prayers be not hindered.*

In the next place, the Apostle presseth the duties of  
Husbands to their Wives, which he comprehendeth in  
two branches: First, That they should manifest a special  
measure of prudence and heavenly wisdom in conversing  
with them; And secondly, that they should season their  
authority over them with tenderness and respect to them:  
both which he presseth by several arguments, 1. From  
the strictness of their obligation to these duties, which  
was the same with that of the Wives to theirs. 2. From  
the weakness and infirmity of the Women, which calls  
for the more wise and tender dealing. 3. From the equal-  
ity of both in partaking of spiritual and eternal privi-  
leges. And, 4. from the hazard of the neglect of those  
duties, to wit, the interrupting of their service to God,  
particularly the marring of their access to him in prayer.  
Hence *Learn*, 1. Husbands are no less strictly tied to  
duty toward their Wives, than the Wives are to duty  
toward them, or any inferior toward their superiour;  
and therefore, they ought not to make their superiority  
a pretence to the neglect of their duty, as if their Wives  
were tied, and themselves left at liberty: for the Apostle  
useth the same word in pressing the duty of Husbands to  
their Wives, which he did before in pressing the duty of  
Wives to their Husbands, and of Servants to their Mas-  
ters; *Likewise, ye husbands*. 2. It is the duty of Hus-  
bands to cohabit with their Wives, and to labour for  
much prudence and wisdom in conversing with them,  
that they may not only know their own duty toward  
them, but may be able to instruct them in theirs. 1 *Cor.*  
14. 25. that they may discern how far to intrust them  
with

5. and that they do not rule them according to their passion and will, but according to that wise rule set down in the Word: for the Apostle here presseth upon Husbands, both cohabitation, and wise walking with their Wives; *To husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge*. 3. There is not only love required of the Husband toward the Wife, but likewise some respect and honour, such as makes them signify their sympathy with them under their crosses. *1 Sam. 1. 8.* their high esteem of the vertues they discern in them, *Prov. 31. 28.* and such as may conciliate respect to them from the rest of the family, *Gen. 16. 6.* for, this is the other branch of the duty of Husbands, *giving honour unto the Wife*. 4. It hath pleased the Lord to exercise the Woman with a special measure of weaknesse and infirmity, both natural, by imposing upon her much pain and labour in bringing forth and educating of Children; and moral, by giving her fewer opportunities than the Man hath of means for perfecting of her natural parts, which likewise are not ordinarily so strong in her as in the Man: in which respects she is here called *the weaker vessel*. 5. The consideration of this weaknesse of the Woman should be so far from making Husbands to despise and slight them, that by the contrary it should increase their respect to them, considering that by reason thereof they are the more easily crushed and broken in their spirits, especially by the austere and undutiful carriage of their Husbands, and the more apt to apprehend themselves slighted: for so it is here made an argument to procure respect to them from their Husbands, *giving honour unto the Wife, as unto the weaker vessel*. 6. Now the work of Gods saving grace in his soul, which is here called the grace of life, because it quickens the soul where it is, for spiritual performances, and clears its right to eternal life; and likewise eternal life it self, which may be safely conceived to be comprehended in the same expression, is the first gift





the one party may be more innocent than the other, yet the guilt of the injuring party, and the grief and passions of the injured, will not only indispose the hearts of both for duties, and mar their hearty joyning in them; but will also readily cut off (as the word here rendered, *to hinder*, signifieth) the very external performances of the duty of Prayer (under which all other religious performances may be comprehended) and mar their access to God, and the success of their duties: for, so much is imported in this last reason, *That your prayers be not hindered*.  
 11. The more conscionable Christians are by the grace of God enabled to be, in the discharge of the particular duties of their several relations, the more access to God, and success of all their religious performances may they expect: for, this motives us it imports the hazard to follow upon the neglect of duties of that sort, so it imports also the advantage to follow upon the conscionable discharge thereof, to wit, that their *Prayers should not be hindered*.

- Ver. 8. Finally, be all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as Brethren, be pitiful, be courteous.  
 9. Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing.

Here is the second part of the Chapter, wherein the Apostle exhorteth to the exercise of such graces and duties of holiness, as do concern every Christian; and do serve in a special way for keeping up a profitable and comfortable communion with God and with his people: of which sort, the Apostle condescended upon seven, First, That they should labour for unity of judgement among themselves. Secondly that they should be affected with one anothers condition, as if it were their own. Thirdly, that their love one to another should resemble that which is among Brethren. Fourthly, that they should pity the infirmities one of another. Fifthly, that they

they should shew themselves courteous in their carriage, and easy to be converted with *1 Cor. 8*. Sixthly, that they should not study to requite mutual injuries: But, generously, rather seek the happiness of them that wrong them. All which, especially the last two, the Apostle presseth by this reason, that they were all called to inherit one common blessedness.

From *1 Cor. 8. 13*, *1 Cor. 12. 1*, Although compleat oneness of judgment cannot be expected among the Lord's People, whilst knowledge is imperfect in all, *1 Cor. 13. 9*. and dispensed in different measures, *Rom. 12. 6*. Yet it ought to be the sincere endeavour of every one, so to drink-in the knowledge of all saving and necessary Truths themselves, and to imploy their power, according to their calling, so make all others do the same, that they may be, so far as is possible, as if one and the same mind were in them all, (as the word here signifieth) which is in some good measure attained, when Christians do agree in all saving and fundamental Truths, and when their prime projects and designs (as the word also signifieth) do meet in one, to wit, the advancement of the glory of Jesus Christ; without which unity of judgment, there doth ordinarily follow among the Lord's People alienation of affection, *Gal. 4. 15, 16*. and a losse of the consolations of Christ's Spirit, which uses to be given through their communion among themselves, *Philip. 2. 1, 2*. for, this is it which the Apostle here expressly presseth. *Finally, be all of one mind.* 2. Every one of the Children of the Lord, ought to be so affected with the condition of another, as if it were their own, mourning with, and for one another in affliction, as if they were afflicted with them, *Heb. 13. 3*. rejoicing in, and praising for, their welfare, as if they were in their case, *Rom. 12. 15*. considering, that they are all members of one body, *1 Cor. 12. 26*. and, that this sympathizing frame of spirit is a special part of our conformity to Jesus Christ, *Heb. 4. 15*. for, this is the second duty here pressed, *bearing compassion one of another.* 3. Whatever differences for worldly respects, or measures

measures of spiritual gifts, there may be among the Children of the Lord, there should be, notwithstanding, such affection and love in the most eminent and strongest, toward the meanest and weakest, as is among Brethren, they being all Children of one Father, *Job. 1. 13.* and the weakest owned by Christ as his Brethren, *Heb. 2. 11.* and co-heirs, not only with the strongest, but with Jesus Christ himself, of everlasting blessedness, *Rom. 8. 17.* and therefore that measure of affection which may be found among men without the Church, who have not put off humanity, is not sufficient for one of the Lord's People toward another: for, this is the third duty here pressed, *Love as Brethren.* 4. There can neither be unity, sympathy, nor brotherly love among the Lord's People, unless they have hearts to pity the infirmities one of another, and some proneness of spirit to do good to others, even when they deserve the contrary at their hands: for, this word, whereby the Apostle presseth the fourth duty, is often used to signify Christ's compassion to his own, which is manifested in bestowing favours notwithstanding provocations, and signifieth such a tender-heartedness, as is evidenced by forgiving of wrongs, *Eph. 4. 32. be pitiful.* 5. They that would keep up a sweet and profitable society with others of the Lord's People, must shew themselves affable and pleasant in their carriage towards them, studying to speak and do, so far as they may with a good conscience, what may be acceptable, and engaging of their affections to them: for, this duty, which is the last in the eight Verse, as also all the former, may be taken in reference to the keeping up of society with others; *be courteous.*

From *Ver. 9. Learn, 1.* Even those who have submitted to such a carriage, as ought in all reason to be lovely and honoured by all with whom they converse, may, notwithstanding, resolve to meet with much hard usage and many slanders: for, the Apostle presseth here, *patience*, in the sixth place, importing, that they who had submitted to all the former five, would, notwithstanding, have

with their patience. *Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing.* 2. The Children of the Lord may resolve not only to meet with hard usage, and bitter language from the profane, or those that are without, but even from their fellow-Professors, whether Hypocrites, who will still be maligning the sincere, *Gal. 4. 29.* or even truly gracious, whose corruptions oppose grace in others, *Job 16. 20.* for, this last grace of patience, prest in the beginning of the eight Verse, cannot well be taken in reference to other persons, than these, in reference to whom the exercise of the former graces or duties were prest, which do clearly relate to other Professors; and therefore this imports, that they might be tried both with evil deeds and words, from such, while the Apostle thus dehortheth, *Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing.* 3. However the best of the Children of the Lord, are prone to study revenge, and requital of private injuries, as is supposed in this dissuasive; Yet must they not allow themselves in so doing, as they love their own, and others peace, and desire to eschew the displeasure of God for usurping his place, *Rom. 12. 19. Prov. 23. 2.* *Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing.* 4. So far should the Lord's People be from the study of private revenge, and retaliation of wrongs done by one of them against another, that by the contrary the greatest personal wrong, by word or deed, should not hinder one of them, to procure the bestowing of blessings, if they be able, upon another, to commend in them what they can discern to be praiseworthy, or to pray for their true blessedness, which is a special draught of the Image of the Lord, *Mat. 5. 46. 45.* All which, is in the signification of this word, wherby the Apostle expresseth the duty opposite to rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing; *but contrariwise, blessing.* 5. The consideration of that everlasting blessedness, which consisteth in the clear vision, and full fruition of God in Christ through the Spirit, and which sinners, who are naturally under the curse, are called to possess, as their free-gifted inheritance (as the word here

translated; to wit, signifies) should comfort the hearts of Believers against the worst usage, and vilest reproaches of men, which will be sufficiently made up when they come to possess that blessedness: the thought whereof should take them off from all study of revenge toward those who may be heirs with them of the same inheritance; and who could never wrong them so far, as they have wronged the Lord, who hath graciously called them to possess that free-gifted inheritance: for, this is here proposed by the Apostle, as an argument to patience under wrongs, and a diswaive from revenge among the Lord's people: for, even *beromus* were ye called, that ye should inherit a blessing.

Verf. 10. *For he that will love life, and see good dayes, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile.*

11. *Let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and enquire it.*

Here is a second motive to the study of the duties formerly preſſed, to wit. That that study was the way to have a ſweet life, and many good dayes in communion with the Lord, notwithstanding of all their troubles: And this argument is taken out of *Pſal. 34. 12, 13.* and doth contain four ſeveral directions, for clearing the way of attaining to that ſweet fellowſhip with God, and among themſelves. The firſt is, that they ſhould watch againſt the evils of the tongue. The ſecond is, that they ſhould ſet againſt every known ſin. The third is, that they ſhould ſet about the practice of every known duty. And fourthly, that they ſhould earneſtly purſue peace with others of the Lord's People, ſo might they expect ſweet communion with himſelf. Hence *Lev. 19.* Although the moſt part of men eſteem their life happy, and their dayes good enough, if they enjoy abundance of earthly comforts. *Pſal. 4. 6, 7.* and *49. 16, 18.* Yet there is no life, which deserves the name of a life; except it be

(continued)

sweetened sometimes with taste of the Lord's special love, nor are there any dayes, that are worthy to be called good dayes, which are not spent in fellowship with God: for this life, and those good dayes here spoken of, are the same with tassing how gracious the Lord is, as appears, by comparing these words, with the ninth verse of the Psalm, whence they are cited. 2. There is no way to live that sweet life, and to see those good dayes that sinners may attain unto, even here away in communion with the Lord, but by the study of holinesse, eschewing every thing that grieves the Spirit of God, and aiming sincerely at the practise of every thing that is well-pleasing in his sight: for, both these are here prest as the way, to have that life, and to see those good dayes. 3. Although men are prone to count very little of the sins of their tongue, *Psal.* 12. 3, 4. Yet much of that guilt, which marreth sweet fellowship with God, will be found in sins of that kind; partly, in idle and unprofitable discourses, whereof men must give an account, *Mat.* 12. 36. foolish talking, and jesting which is not convenient, *Eph.* 3. 4. rigid censuring of, and bitter envenoming against others, which makes all that Christians do in Religion, uselesse, *1 Tim.* 1. 26. and grieves the Spirit of God, *Eph.* 4. 29, 30, 31. meddling with those things in discourse wherein folks are not concerned, *1 Tim.* 5. 13. and the like, which may be comprehended under that which is here called *Evil*; and partly, in equivocation, *Gen.* 20. 2, 11. venting of error under fair speeches and pretences, *Rom.* 16. 17. and hypocritical or fained discourses, whereby Christians do give out themselves to be what they are not, which resembles that, whereunto *David* relateth in that passage of the Psalm which is here cited, as appears, by comparing the words with the title of that Psalm. All which, and the like, may be comprehended under *guile*; and both sorts of sins of the tongue, are to be abstained from by those, that would enjoy communion with the Lord: for, in order to that, that is the first instruction, *He that will save life, and see good dayes, let him*

refrain

*restrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile.* 4. These Christians never so innocent in their discourses, and watchful over their tongue, except also they make it their serious study to keep a distance in heart and practice from every known sin; and that as it is evil, and contrary to the holy nature and will of God, they cannot expect to keep up that sweet communion with God, which he allows upon his own: for, this is the second direction necessary for attaining to that end, *Let him eschew evil.* 5. It is not simple abstinence from sin, (suppose that could be attained to without further) that fixeth souls for entertaining fellowship with God, unlesse there be also joyned therewith a sincere and universal aim at every thing that is well-pleasing in the sight of God, both in duties relating more immediately to God, and his publick matters in the world, *2 Chron.* 24. 16. and in duties toward others of his People, whether those of our particular relations, *1 Tim.* 5. 4. or others, *Gal.* 6. 10. to which these Scriptures give the name of doing good: for, this is the third direction for attaining and enjoying communion with God, *Let him do good.* 6. They that desire to have much peace in fellowship with God, must be very serious in studying peace with others, both by living peaceably with them themselves, so far as is possible, *Rom.* 12. 18. without prejudice to Truth, *2 Pet.* 2. 19. or holiness, *Heb.* 12. 14. and procuring and cherishing peace among others of the Lord's People, *Mat.* 5. 9. both which are comprehended in this fourth direction for attaining to, and enjoying of communion with God; *Let him seek peace, and pursue it.* 7. As there will be no small difficulty from Satan, our own and others corruptions, in the way of attaining and entertaining peace among the Lord's People; So none of them must stand upon their pains in the pursuit thereof, nor quit the same, though upon many former essays they have not had success, and though peace seems to be flying from them. All which is imported in the fortification and doubling of the word here, *Seek peace, and pursue it.*



Verf. 12. For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil.

Here are three further arguments to presse the fore-mentioned duties: The first is, that the watchful providence of God is exercised about them for their good, who having fled to the righteousness of Christ, do also walk in the way of righteousness or holiness formerly described. The second is, that he doth favourably accept of their prayers. And the third is, that the terror and wrath of God is imployed against those that walk in the contrary way. Hence *Learn*, 1. It is the priviledge of justified persons, walking in the way of holiness, to have the favourable providence of God, watching over them for good; which comprehends his furnishing of them with every thing necessary for their welfare; *Deut.* 11. 13. warding hazards off them, as far as shall be for their good, *1 Chron.* 16. 9. rendring inefficall all opposition made to them, while he hath service for them, *Ezra.* 5. 5. supporting them under, and delivering them from all their troubles in due time, *Psal.* 33. 18. and making out his Covenant to them, *Jer.* 24. 6. 7. All which, the Scriptures cited, make clear to be comprehended in this expression which holds forth their priviledges; *The eyes of the Lord are over the righteous.* 2. Although, for wise reasons, the prayers of the Lord's People may have no answer for a time, even after frequency and importunity in that duty, *2 Cor.* 12. 8. Yea, and to their sense, may seem to be mis-regarded by the Lord, *Psal.* 22. 2. Yet their requests have alwayes a favourable acceptance with Him, in so far as He delights to hear them, *Psal.* 145. 18. *Gen.* 22. 14. and during the delay, as preparing them for a good answer, *Psal.* 119. 17. 14. 30. 48. 19. Providing, they be praying for things agreeable to His will, *1 Joh.* 3. 14. not to gratifie their lusts, *Ps.* 3. 3. but for his glory, and building their confidence of acceptance upon

upon Christs merits and intercession. *Job. 24. 12.* for this must be some special notice he takes of their prayers, since he hears also the prayers of the wicked, though with detestation. *Prov. 28. 9. His ears are open to their prayers.* 3. Only those who in the sense of their own unrighteousness are fled to the righteousness of Christ, that so their persons may be accepted with God, and have obtained grace to be sincere students of true holiness, may lay claim to these privileges, the Lord's favourable providence exercised about them for good, and his acceptance of their prayers as for, *the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open to their prayers.*

4. That which makes the life of Believers a life indeed, and their dayes good dayes to them in the midst of many troubles, is this favourable providence of God watching over them for their good, and his gracious acceptance of their prayers through his Son: for these privileges are brought in to clear wherein that life, and those good days, spoken of in the former words, do stand, even in this, that *the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open to their prayers.*

5. However the Lord may long spare wicked men in their sinful courses; from which indulgency of his, they take occasion to do more and more wickedly, *Eccles. 8. 11.* Yet His constant purpose is to destroy all of them, who make a constant trade of provoking Him, *Psal. 69. 21.* and that without any baten or reluctance in their heart. *Exod. 16. 21.* and at last He will employ his power and terror for their ruine; as is imported in this, *The fate of the Lord is against them that do evil.*

6. It is both lawful and necessary for the Lord's People to encourage their own hearts in the duties of holiness; by the consideration of that sweetness which the Lord useth to let out to them, while they hold that way, and to deter their hearts from those sins whereunto they do strongly incline. By the consideration of the blessing abiding them that continue in sin: For, both the pain of guiltiness, and the hazard of sinful courses, is here proposed to be considered by them for these ends; *for, the*

eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, &c. But the face of the Lord is against them that do evil.

Verf. 13. And who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?

Followeth the last part of the Chapter, which is full of encouragement against sufferings, and motives to the duties of holiness notwithstanding thereof, together with several directions for attaining to a right carriage under the same. The first encouragement is, That the following of duty, notwithstanding of suffering, would prove the best way of any to eschew the hurt of all trouble from wicked men, with whom the Lord would assuredly reckon for molesting of his People, while they were following their duty to him. Hence Learn, 1. Although the Godly may expect the hardest usage, in following their duty, that wicked men can devise or inflict upon them, *Heb. 11. 34.* Yet properly, there can be no harm or evil done unto them, in regard the nature of all afflictions, especially for well-doing, is charged to them, *Rom. 8. 28.* their persecutors cannot at all reach their better part, *Luke 12. 4.* and all their losses by suffering for Truth, are more than sufficiently made up to them, *Mat. 19. 29.* for, this question may be safely conceived to have the force of a denial, *None shall be able to harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good.* 2. The best way to eschew, at least to mitigate trouble, even from wicked men, is close adherence to that which is right in the sight of God: not because wicked men favour the way of well-doing; but because the Lord doth sometimes allay their fury against those that follow it, by puning convictions upon their conscience of the equity of the cause which they persecute, *1 Sam. 24. 17, 22.* and doth sometimes work in their heart some reverence toward it, and them that follow it, *Mark 6. 20.* for here the Apostle mentioneth the following of that which is good, as the best way of eschewing trouble from wicked men.

who would be glad to see the miscarriage of the Godly, that they might thence have occasion to trouble them: *And who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?* 3. Whosoever shall enterprize to harm, or evil intreat (as the word here signifieth) the Children of the Lord for their dutifulness to him, the Lord shall enquire after them, he shall find them out, and reckon with them, be who they will: for, this question may be taken for the Lord's challenge of them, and his enquiry for them, to judge them; *Who is he that will harm you?* 4. The Children of the Lord are not only to go about their duty in obedience to his Commands, but likewise in imitation both of Christ himself, as their prime pattern, *Eph. 5. 1.* and of the rest of his Saints who have walked in that way before them, *Heb. 6. 11.* for, this is the description of those to whom this encouragement is given, that they are *followers* (or, as the word is, *imitators*) of *that which is good.*

*Verf. 14. But and if ye suffer for righteousness sake, happy are ye, and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled.*

† The second encouragement to constancy in duty, notwithstanding of sufferings, is, That if Christians be put to suffer for adhering to the way of free justification by Christ's imputed righteousness, (which legalists did then persecute) or, for any duty of holiness (which Libertines opposed) those sufferings should evidence and promote their true blessedness: from which encouragement, the Apostle doth infer, in the following words, several directions for attaining to a right carriage under suffering; whereof the first is in this verse, to wit, That they should labour to banish the fear of what flesh could do unto them, and not suffer their hearts to be terrified or perturbed, by the terror or hard usage of wicked men, while they suffered for so honourable a cause: Hence *1 Cor. 1.* Were the cause which the Lord's People maintain, *verf.*

yllgood, and their carriage in following of it never so  
 innocent, it is in vain for them to dream of exemption  
 from trouble, at the hands of wicked men, who are  
 oftentimes the more incensed against them that their  
 cause be good, *Ioh. 7. 7.* and their carriage a shame and  
 reproof to others, *1 Ioh. 3. 13.* for, left from the former  
 encouragement any might expect exemption from trou-  
 ble by following that which is good, he doth in this  
 suppose that they might expect to be put to *suffer for*  
*righteousness sake.* 2. The sufferings of the Godly for  
 righteousness sake, are so far from making them mise-  
 rable, as themselves are apt to apprehend, *Psal. 73. 13.*  
 and the wicked world do ordinarily judge, *2 Cor. 4. 13.*  
 that by the contrary, they serve both to promote their  
 spiritual happinesse, the times of suffering being the  
 times wherein every grace thrives most, *Rom. 5. 3.* and  
 divine consolation aboundeth most in their hearts, *2 Cor.*  
*1. 5.* and likewise to evidence and prove to them their  
 right to everlasting blessednesse, *Philip. 1. 28.* a special  
 measure whereof is reserved for the greatest sufferers, *Rey.*  
*6. 13.* &c. for, this second encouragement doth contra-  
 dict the Lord's Peoples ordinary apprehension of them-  
 selves, and the profane worlds opinion of them, under  
 suffering; *If ye suffer for righteousness sake, happy are ye.*  
 3. The best of the Children of the Lord are in hazard  
 to have their spirits troubled and perplexed with the fear  
 of hazard from flesh, which is then exceeding sinfull  
 when it makes them deny the Truth, *Mat. 26. 70.* or take  
 any sinful course for their temporal safety, *1 Sam. 21. 10.*  
*17.* or when their spirits are thereby defiled and mud-  
 ded (as the word in the Original here signifieth) with  
 passion against the instruments of their trouble, *Mat. 26.*  
*138.* which hazard, is imported in this dissuative, given to  
 those that *suffer for righteousness sake, Fear not their fear,*  
*neither be troubled.* 4. They who are fled to the righteous-  
 nesse of Jesus Christ, and desire to adhere to that which  
 is right in his sight, notwithstanding of sufferings, have  
 no cause to fear what flesh can do unto them, or to have  
 their

their spirits perturbed under the hand of their sufferings; considering that what ever they suffer, is according to the Lord's fore-appointments, & *Thess. 1. 3.* and carved out by His all-ruling providence, *Mat. 10. 30.* that they have the promise of his presence with them under their sufferings, *Heb. 13. 3, 6.* and are sure of a glorious issue out of them, *1 Cor. 4. 17.* Upon which grounds they ought to banish fleshly fear and perturbation out of their hearts, as the Apostle here exhorteth, *Fear not their pain, neither be troubled.*

**Verf. 15.** *But sanctifie the Lord God in your hearts, and be ready alwayes to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear.*

This Verse contains some further directions to persecuted Christians, for attaining to a right frame of spirit, and carriage under their sufferings. The second, in order, is, That they should reverence and adore in their hearts, the sovereignty and holiness of God, especially in that dispensation of his toward them, in putting them to suffer, while their wicked persecutors prospered; which direction, as also the former, is taken out of *Isa. 8. 2* & *1. 3.* The third is, That they should timorously sanctifie themselves with such clear knowledge of the Truth, that they may be able to hold forth from the Word of God, reasons of what they believe and suffer for. The fourth is, That their testimony for the Truth should be seasoned with meekness, even toward their persecutors. And the fifth is, That they should entertain in their hearts, a holy fear of miscarrying in the way of giving that testimony. Hence *Learn. 1.* It is a principal part of a Christian's disposition for sufferers, to entertain in their hearts, the sense and acknowledgment of the holiness of God, and though he be weaklesse in holiness, *1 Sam. 17. 46.* and can have nothing added to that, or any other of his infinite perfections, by any creature, *Rom. 11. 33.*

Yet doth esteem himself sanctified in the hearts of his own, while they are by the consideration of his holiness made submissive to the hardest of his dispensations toward them, *Psal.* 22. 3. afraid to offend so holy a Majesty, *Isa.* 29. 22. and thereby also are confirmed in the faith of his performing all his Promises, *Psal.* 111. 9. and executing of his threatnings, upon his enemies and theirs, *Job.* 1. 12. for, this is the Apostle's second direction, for attaining to a right frame of spirit under sufferings, *Sanctifie the Lord God in your hearts* 2. The Children of the Lord, while they are under hard usage from wicked men, are in great hazard not only to forget the sovereignty of God over them, to use them as he pleases for his own glory, which occasioneth much perturbation of spirit in them, *Isa.* 51. 12, 13. but likewise to entertain in their hearts, thoughts unsuitable to the holiness and purity of his Nature, as if their sufferings, and the wicked's prosperity, were not consistent therewith; both which are imported in this exhortation to acknowledge the holiness of God, whom the Apostle representeth under such names as hold forth also his sovereignty, *Sanctifie the Lord God in your hearts*. 3. Although the Godly ought not to be anxious concerning their furniture in a time of trial, *Mat.* 10. 19. Yet ought they not to neglect ordinary means of preparation for trials, such as the drinking-in of the solid and clear knowledge of the Truth, *1 Tim.* 6. 19. entertaining the presence of that Spirit who revealeth Truths not yet known, and brings known Truths to remembrance when it is necessary, *Job.* 19. 26. that so they may be able to defend the Truth by holy reason drawn from the Scripture, or make apology for it, as the word here signifies, and answer objections that may be made against the same, *Prov.* 25. 28. as is imported in this third direction, *Be ready alwayes to answer every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you*. 4. Although in some cases the Children of the Lord may safely answer their adversaries with silence, or wit, when they have sufficiently and frequently

quently born testimony to such Truths before, *Mat. 27. 12, 14.* or when questions are propounded to them by wicked men out of scorn, *Prov. 26. 5.* or curiosity, *Luke 23. 8, 9, 11.* or to be a snare to the Godly, *Isa. 36. 22.* Yet ought they still to keep themselves in a readinesse of mind and finesse of disposition for defending the Truth, and giving a reason of what they hold, when the glory of God, and edification of others, call for it, the season and manner whereof, every humble waiter on God shall know from Him, *Luke 12. 11, 12.* and *21. 14, 15.* *Mat. 23. 1.* for, the Apostle doth not direct them here to answer alwayes every man that asketh them, but to be ready alwayes to answer every one that asketh a reason. 5. The Children of the Lord ought not to satisfie themselves with any confidence or perswasion concerning the truths of the Gospel, whereof they have not such clear and rational grounds from the Word, as may not only convince themselves, but such as they are able to hold forth to others, when they are called; *be ready to give a reason to every man that asketh you.* 6. Every testimony that God's People give to his Truth before the enemies of it, ought to be seasoned with meeknesse of spirit, evidenced in their carriage toward their persecutors by their eschewing all signs of carnal passion and revenge against them, *1 Thess. 5. 15.* by their respective and sober language to them, *2 Cor. 12. 35.* which may be blessed of God to procure a mitigation of their trouble, *Prov. 15. 1.* at least to put convictions upon the wicked of the equity of the cause which they persecute, as the following Verse cleareth: for, this is the fourth direction for a right carriage under sufferings, that they be ready to give a testimony to the Truth with meekness. 7. Although the fear of flesh, which marreth confidence and peace in the heart, be most unsuitable for sufferers, as was cleared from the Apostles first direction; Yet, a holy fear of miscarriage under trials, by denying, or concealing any necessary Truth, by bringing forth the same untruthfully, or mixing our own passions with our testimony to the Truth, is a great



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qualification of a right sufferer for Christ and his Truth  
for <sup>arm</sup> is the Apostle's fifth direction, That they should  
1. <sup>John</sup> to bear testimony to the Truth with fear.

1. <sup>1</sup> *1 Cor. 16.* Having a good conscience, that whereas they speak  
evil of you, as of evil doers, they may be ashamed that falsely  
accuse your good conversation in Christ.

Here is a fifth direction for attaining to a right carriage under suffering, That they should labour to have their conscience purged from guiltnesse; and so made good in God's sight; the study whereof, as also of all the former, the Apostle presseth by a third motive, which is also an encouragement against suffering, That if they made conscience of following those directions their standing persecutors should be convinced and ashamed by their christian carriage. Hence *Learn*, 1. None can rightly undergo a suffering lot for Christ and his Truth, who do not labour to get, and keep a good conscience within, by the application of Christ's blood for purging of it from guilt, and of the virtue of his Spirit, for subduing the power of corruption. *Heb. 10. 22.* which proves a continual feast to them that have it. *Prov. 15. 15.* and so makes them cheerful under their hardest sufferings, *1 Cor. 1. 12.* for this is the Apostle's sixth direction, for attaining to a right frame of spirit and carriage under suffering, *having a good conscience*. 2. Even those who have attained to a good conscience within, and an honest conversation without, may resolve not only to meet with hard sufferings, but as a principal ingredient embittering the same to have many false and grievous crimes laid to their charge, and those not only forged, and spread in a private way for their disgrace, but (as the word here translated, *to speak evil*, signifieth) given in judicially against them, that so they may be the like to their Lord, *Mark 15. 2.* and may learn to die to their credit before men, while they are honoured to suffer for Him, *1 Cor. 15. 31.* for this the Apostle supposes to be the lot of those, who have both a good conscience, and a good conversation, that

that they shall be evil spoken of, as evil doers, and have a good conversation falsely accused. 3. It is the Lords way, to bring the shame and confusion of wicked men out of the integrity and uprightnesse of his suffering people, and the endeavours of their enemies to disgrace them by drawing a testimony of his Peoples innocency, for some of their adversaries to the shame of the rest, *Ab. 2. 29. and 36. 31.* by enabling his suffering Servants to maintain his Truth, and their own innocency, with such cleannesse and power as sometimes confounds their opposers, *1st. 2. 8.* by making use of enemies fury, and his Peoples constancy, to disappoint wicked designs, and directly to promote the cause which enemies intend to crush, *Philip. 1. 12.* that so they may either be reclaimed from their opposition to his Truth and People, or have everlasting shame poured upon them, *Psal. 83. 26. 43.* for, this is the result which God bringeth out of all the wickeds slander, and persecution of the Godly, that they may be ashamed who falsely accuse their good conversation in Christ. 4. The consideration of the disappointment and shame, which the Lord doth sometimes make wicked men to meet with here, for their persecuting and slandering of his People, should be a strong motive to the Godly, to constancy in following their duty, whatever they may suffer: for this is given to them here for their encouragement, that whereas they speak evil of the Godly, as evil doers, they may be ashamed who falsely accuse their good conversation in Christ. 5. To the end that the conversation of a Christian may be good in Gods sight, and may serve to make their slanderers and persecutors ashamed, it must flow from a good conscience within, and must be a conversation in Christ, the person being by Faith united to Him, and enabled to draw virtue from Him for walking unto wel-pleasing, *Job. 19. 5.* and to aim at conformity in the conversation to His character, *Job. 2. 6.* for both these are necessary for that conversation of a Christian, which may make persecutors ashamed, and which deserveth to be called a good conversation.

verification; Having a good conscience, that whereas they  
speak evil, yet they may be absolved who falsely accuse you  
good conversation in Christ.

Verf. 17. For it is better, if the will of God be so, that ye  
suffer for well doing, than for evil doing.

The fourth motive to presse the former directions, and  
to encourage against suffering, is, That in their suffering  
for Christ, and their duty to Him, they should find much  
more comfort and spiritual advantage, than if they did  
procure sufferings to themselves by their miscarriage;  
And this fourth motive, or encouragement, hath a fifth  
in the bosom of it, That they should not be put to a ne-  
cessity of suffering, except it were the good will of the  
Lord so to dispose. Hence *Learn*, 1. Christians have  
a great deal of more spiritual advantage, honour and  
sweetness in suffering for Christ, and duty to Him, than  
they could have in suffering for their faults, though they  
had obtained mercy for them from the Lord, and had  
peace in their spirits while they did stoop to the stroke  
of humane justice inflicted for these faults; the former  
sort of sufferings being more conform to Christ's, and  
having ordinarily a larger allowance of peace and  
cheerfulness, than useth to be letten forth to them who  
suffer for their faults, though they were never so sure of  
God's mercy: for, in this sense must the Apostle be un-  
derstood here to compare suffering for well doing, and  
for evil doing, and to prefer the one to the other; because  
suffering from men for evil doing, without obtaining  
mercy from God, hath no goodnesse in it at all, and so  
cannot be compared in that with suffering for well-  
doing: as here it is by the Apostle; For, *it is better to  
suffer for well doing, than for evil doing.* 2. The confi-  
deration of this difference, in regard of comfort and spi-  
ritual advantage, which is betwixt suffering for well-  
doing and for evil doing, should move the Lord's  
People to watchfulness and tender walking, lest by their  
mis-

miscarriage, they deserve suffering at mens hands; and so constancy in suffering for well doing, considering that they have within them strong inclinations to such evils, as being acted, might justly put them so suffer before men; and that if they shift duty to Him, for fear of suffering from men, He may justly leave them so fall in those sins, which may procure harder sufferings, with lesse comfort, than what they should have met with in suffering for well doing; for, this is here brought in as a motive to constancy in duty, and suffering in the way of duty, *that it is better to suffer for well doing, than for evil doing.* 3. Suffering for well doing, is a duty that doth not bind, as negative precepts do, at all times, and in all cases; nor are the Children of the Lord tied to it, as they are to some other positive duties, for the opportunity whereof they are to watch, 1 Pet. 4. 7. but is only binding when the Lord by his providence, hath brought his People under the power of persecutors, and they do put them to a necessity either of suffering, or sinning: in which case only, the Lord manifesteth his will to his People that they should suffer: for, the Apostle here commendeth suffering, not absolutely as other duties, but only upon this supposition, that it be manifested to be the will of God; *For it is better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well doing, than for evil doing.* 4. When Gods will that his People should suffer is manifested to them, by leaving them no midst between sin and suffering, then they ought with courage and chearfulnesse to choose suffering as the only best course for them, considering that his will is a good will to them; and so would have prevented their suffering, if it had been good for them; that without His will, no creature could bring them to that necessity; and that as it is His will, they should suffer for Him, so it is His will they should reign with Him: for, this is here cast in as a special encouragement to constancy in suffering for well doing, that they should not be put to undergo that lot, except the will of God be so.

Wilt thou, For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just, for the unjust: (that he might bring us to God), being crucified in the flesh, but quickened by the spirit.

The such motive, or encouragement, to constancy in duty, notwithstanding of hardest sufferings, is taken from Christ's sufferings for us, whence many encouraging arguments to suffer for Him may be drawn. The sum of all which is, That since the innocent Son of God hath completely satisfied God's justice for unworthy sinners, that He might reconcile them to God, having for that end suffered to the very death in his humanity; and that He might apply his purchase, is raised up again by the power of his Spirit on Godhead; it doth therefore well become his faithful Followers for whom He died and rose again, to undertake cheerfully a suffering lot in following their duty so His. Hence *Lect. 2.* Of all motives that may prevail with Christians to suffer for Christ, when they are called, His suffering in their room is one of the strongest, and should be most frequently made use of by themselves; and ends: considering that He by His sufferings hath taken the sting out of all theirs, *1st.* 4. hath defeated all their enemies, *Job.* 16. 23. *Gal.* 2. 21. hath bestowed a fullness of grace to follow concerning the right way of suffering, *Heb.* 2. 1. hath engaged them not to desire a better lot than He had, *Job.* 1. 21. and hath made sure their perseverance and eternal happiness, which most of their troubles are war, *Rom.* 8. 35. for the Apostle having made use of this same argument in the same purpose, in the close of the former Chapter, doth here again insist upon it, in the strongest and that which should have most weight with all His Redeemed Ones to move them to suffer for Him: For Christ also hath suffered for us, that as the whole time of Christ's human life was a continual source of suffering; so by His example, and especially by His offering Himself a sacrifice for us upon the Crosse, He hath so completed the work

of satisfaction to Gods justice, for the sins of the World, and of purchasing peace and glory to them, that nothing thereof remained to be done, nor needeth that sacrifice be again repeated: for, though His sufferings were finite in regard of duration: Yet in regard of the worth, which the excellency of His Person who was God, did add to them, they were infinite: for, both in respect of the continuation of His sufferings all along His state of transgression, and in regard of the completeness of them for satisfaction to Gods justice, as also in opposition to all the legal sacrifices, which for their imperfection believed to be often repeated, *Heb. 7. 27.* the Apostle saith here, *He hath once suffered for sins.* 3. Although our blessed Mediator had all the sins of all the Elect upon Him by imputation, *1 Cor. 5. 21.* and the punishment laid upon Him of all the heinous crimes that ever were, or shall be committed by the Elect, *Isa. 53. 6.* Yet was He in Himself completely just and righteous, not only as He is God, *Isa. 45. 21.* but even as Man, He being wholly freed of that original corruption, *Luke 1. 29.* wherewith all others that are come of *Adam* are defiled, *Joh. 1. 4.* and completely conform to the Law of God in heart and practice, *Mat. 3. 15.* that so as our Mediator He might be lovely to God, *Psal. 45. 7.* and to all the Saints, *1 Cor. 1. 16.* for, so the Apostle sees Him to be, who suffered for sins, *the just for the unjust.* 4. There was nothing in those, for whom Christ suffered, to have moved Him to lay down his life for them, many of them who were then living, being his actual persecutors and murderers, and all of them being still in enmity with Him, till He by the virtue of His death changed them, and yet His free love made Him suffer for their sins, *the just for the unjust.* 5. As all are naturally sinners, *Rom. 3. 23.* and the Godly, which best are, are bound, and unable to come nearer, *1 Cor. 13. 12.* but that by the comfortable end of Christs death, and His resurrection to living, that sinners might be brought to a full conversion to God, to favour and reconciliation with

God, Col. 2. 21. and that being dead, to a growing nearness to wit, of communion and fellowship, all things be completely one with Him. *Joh. 17. 11. 20. 22.* Forasmuch as doth the Apostle expresse the end of Christ's death, and His intention in dying, that He might lead us by the hand (as the word here signifieth) and give us ready access to a reconciled God. He hath suffered for sins, the Just for the unjust, *that He might bring us unto God.* 6. No lesser degree of suffering could be accepted from our Cautioner, than the suffering of death, there being no other way, except all had eternally died, to illustrate the exact justice and righteousness of God in punishing sin, *Rom. 3. 24. 25.* and his faithfulness in executing that just threatening, *Gen. 2. 17.* to take away the sting out of the first death to His own, *1 Cor. 15. 55.* and keep them from tasting of the second, *Joh. 8. 51.* for which cause the Apostle here affirms of our Mediator, *That He suffered, being put to death.* 7. Although Christ did truly humble Himself even in respect of His Deity, by assuming frail flesh, in a personal union therewith, *Joh. 1. 14.* and obscuring the glory thereof for a time with the veil of flesh, *Philip. 2. 6. 7.* Yet (the Godhead being altogether impassible) His sufferings were properly in His humanity, to wit, both in His soul, which suffered the unspeakable wrath of God, *Joh. 12. 27. Mat. 26. 38.* and in His body, which suffered all sorts of torments whereof it was capable, *Luke 22. 44.* both which parts of humane nature are here comprehended in one, because His soul suffered only while it was dwelling in flesh, before His death; *being put to death in the flesh.* 8. Our Cautioner having paid our debt, could not be holden in the prison of death, but by the power of His own Spirit, or Godhead, which are essentially one, was quickened in His humanity, by the union of His soul to His body, and raised up, as an evidence that He was discharged of our debt, and we in Him. *Rom. 4. 25.* so that we shall be quickened by the virtue of His blood, to the resurrection of life, *Rom. 6. 4. 8. 9.*

Chap.  
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ter death raised to possesse glory with Him, 1 Cor. 15. for, He was put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit. 9. All the considerations of our suffering Mediatour, whereof the Apostle doth here mention several, are strong inducements to His Redeemed People to suffer for Him, when He calls them to that honour: For, so may every particular here mentioned be applied; that since the Son of God being so innocent and just, did suffer, and by suffering did so compleatly satisfy Justice, for so mis-deserving wretches, and did suffer to the very death, for so sweet an end to bring sinners to God, and had so glorious an outgate, It becometh all His Redeemed Ones to adventure chearfully upon suffering for Him: to which every expression here may be applied as a motive; For, even Christ hath suffered for sin, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God: being put to death in the flesh, but quickened through the Spirit.

Verf. 19. By which also He went and preached unto the spirits in prison.

20. Which sometime were disobedient, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the dayes of Noah, while the Ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is eight souls, were saved by water.

Here is the seventh argument pressing upon Christians constant obedience to the Gospel, notwithstanding of hardest sufferings; The sum whereof is, That since there are many souls of men and women, to whom Christ and once by his Spirit in the Ministry of Noah, and others of his Servants, make plain the way to life and salvation, who are now imprisoned in Hell for evermore, because of their slighting so much patience and pains, as the Lord did exercise toward them, especially during the time of Noah, preparing the Ark, wherein a few only escaped destruction by the flood: Therefore it doth comend them who have the Gospel more clearly preached to them, to persevere thereunto, whatever they may suffer.



in which times, *Hierem. 23. 1.* The second Person of the blessed Trinity hath been exercising his Ministry in Office, long before his incarnation; and by his Spirit the third Person, speaking through his Servants, hath been publicly inviting sinners to repentance, and faith in himself; for, this preaching to the old world here spoken of, must be the same in substance with that which is more clearly held forth now under the Gospel; it being Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever, *Eph. 13. 8.* who did then preach by his Spirit, who speaks his mind only, *Job. 40. 13, 14.* By which he was *and preached.* 4. When the mind of Christ is plainly held forth by the Ministry of his Servants, then Christ himself comes to them (to bestow himself, and fellowship with him) by his Spirit upon them that receive his Word; and to deal with others in wrath, as if they had rejected him, immediately, and in his own Person dealing with them; for, though Christ did not preach in Person to the old world, but only in the Ministry of Noah, and some of his Servants. Yet, of Him it is here said that by his Spirit he *was and preached.* 3. It pleaseth the Lord to turn to repentance, and make offers of his grace unto many who will never obey his counsel, nor imbrace his offers, that he may make his grace more manifest, while he doth more effectually prevail with his own people among them, *Am. 18. 10.* and may take away all excuse from them that wilfully disobey his counsel, and reject his offers. *Job. 15. 22.* For, there are spirits of evil, who once had Christ preached to them, that are now *in bondage.* 4. The souls of men and women do not die with them, nor die in their bodies; but so soon as they are separated from the body, must either go to heaven, or to hell, according to their consciences, *Eccl. 23. 12.* and so are they everlastingly imprisoned; for, there is no prison where their bodies are, but that is a prison where their souls are to be kept. 5. Hell is a state of

Devils and damned souls to damnation, and there is  
where there is no possibility of escape; for as the  
foe can be meant nothing else but Hell, (where it is  
in Scripture hath this name many times, *Rev. 19. 1.*) it being  
the place where only the spirits of them who were dis-  
obedient to the Lord are now in prison. 6. Of all the  
sins that men and women commit, who have the word  
of salvation truly preached to them, this is of the highest  
nature, and the chief cause of their damnation, that they  
will not be perswaded to accept the offers of that  
grace and mercy in Christ; will not obey the sweet  
receptions of his Word; will not follow the motions and  
drawings of his Spirit with them thereby in which comes  
whoever do continue, they look like those that are  
appointed for the prison of Hell; for it is clear by comparing  
this Text with *Gen. 6. 3.* that these, being given  
offers of forgiveness of sin, and eternal life through  
Christ; invitations to repentance and holiness;  
and some motions of his Spirit working with his Word;  
and yet, though they were guilty of many gross and  
filthy sins, as appeareth by the filthy and wicked  
works of *Gen. 6.* their disobedience to the Gospel, and  
unwillingness to be perswaded thereby (as the word  
saith) is here set down as the chief cause of their  
perpetual imprisonment in Hell; those *spirits* which  
were sometimes were disobedient. 7. The Lord  
the first give over dealing with despisers of his  
counsels, and rejecters of his blessed offers, and  
for their deserved punishment; and draw them  
tence in length toward them, as the word saith  
that they may be the more inexcusable, and  
the glory of long-suffering and patience of God  
and: they upon those who are now in prison, and  
prison of God who waited to the day of their  
damnation. 8. Can make the Lord's patience  
and long-suffering towards them have ended; and  
that they shall come here to be punished, and  
that they shall be in the prison of Hell.

torment and vexation, *Luke 16. 25.* for, here the Spirit of the Lord, speaking by this Apostle, declared to the world, that he is mindful of the despising of his patience and pains, manifested many thousand years ago, toward them that are now in Hell; *Once the long-suffering of God waited in the dayes of Noah, &c.* 9. Even those who may have good hope through grace, that they are delivered from the pit of destruction, ought to consider the woful case of them that are there, as a mean to keep them from provoking the Lord by those sins, which bring souls to that prison; and as a motive unto thankfulness to Jesus Christ, and constancy in duty to him, notwithstanding of temporary sufferings, who hath delivered them from the same: for, here the case of the damned for disobedience to the Gospel, is presented by the Apostle to the consideration of those, who, (as he supposeth in the former words) might comfort themselves in their exemption from wrath by Christ's sufferings, as an argument to constancy in holiness, notwithstanding of hardest usage from men; which is the Apostle's scope to press. 10. When the Lord vouchsafes to send his Word unto a People, he useth also with it to frame his workings and dispensations, so as may be most fitting for bearing in the Word upon them, that if they reject and slight both, their stripes may be double: for, beside that Christ went and preached to the old world, he made a work to be wrought before their eyes, which was a visible preaching of wrath to come upon them, except they did repent, and a real invitation of them to repentance, that they seeing such a small vessel, in comparison of the great multitude that were upon the face of the earth, every one might have studied to be one of those who might have had entrance into it: *He went and preached, and his long-suffering waited while the Ark was a preparing.* 11. Whenever the Lord hath judgments to bring upon the generation of a People, it is his way to provide sufficient means of mercy for his own that are among them; so as they may see the outward judgments, as here, and always

Chap. 3. *Job's Afflictions*.  
 the evil of it. *Psal. 91. 10.* for while yet I am  
 preaching upon the old world, *(the Ark was a preaching,*  
*wherin few, that is eight souls, were saved.)* 12. Though  
 there never were, nor will be at any time standing, some  
 true Believers in Jesus Christ, in regard of his standing  
 relation of a Husband and Head to the Church; Yet  
 so far may profanity, or error, overspread the face of the  
 Church, that the number of visible Professors may be  
 very few; and therefore the multitude of such can be no  
 real mark of the true Church; for, here in all the world  
 there are but a few (and of those, a great part wicked, for  
 what may be gathered from the Scripture history) *that*  
*is eight souls, saved by water.* 13. It may fare the better  
 with the wicked in this life (though nothing in that  
 which is to come) that they have been in society with  
 the Godly, and have outward relations to them, partly  
 for the more satisfaction and encouragement of the God-  
 ly, who are tied to them by natural bonds, or affection;  
 and partly, that they may be some way serviceable to the  
 Godly in the Work of the Lord; for which causes  
 among others, there are here *eight souls* (whereof some  
 were of a wicked disposition, and called *Wicked*, *who*  
*saved by water.* 14. The Lord can make that which is  
 the mean of destruction to the wicked, a mean of safety  
 to his own: for, the water which drowned the world,  
 beareth up the Ark; and so provideth a mean  
 of the safety of these eight, *who were saved by water.*

Vers. 21. *The like figure whereunto; even Baptism, doth*  
*also now save us, (not the putting away of the filth of the*  
*flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God;) by*  
*the resurrection of Jesus Christ.*

The eight encouragement to constancy in following  
 Christ, and his Truth, is, That since Believers have a  
 natural privilege transferrable to the Ark, sealing them  
 from the wrath of God's wrath, to wit, that they  
 are the chosen part of a whole, which can be destroyed

the flesh of the body. But the internal; to wit, the application of Christ's blood to the consciences of Believers, which the Apostle expresseth here by the effect thereof, that thereby Believers may challenge all Christ's purchase as theirs; and answer all challenges to the contrary; and that upon this ground, that their Cautioner is absolved from their Debt. whereof his Resurrection is the evidence: Therefore they have no reason to faint in following their duty, or fear to be lost in the midst of their sufferings. Hence *Learn*, 1. Whatever outward privilege any of the Lord's People had of old, when he was working in a more extraordinary way than now, every ordinary Believer may find in Jesus Christ a spiritual privilege answerable to it: Faith can feed upon Christ the bread from Heaven, *Joh. 6. 32, 35.* as the *Israelites* did upon the Manna; it can draw spiritual life and health from him, as the stung *Israelites* had health to their bodies by looking to the brazen Serpent, *Joh. 3. 15, 18.* and can find spiritual and eternal safety in Him through his own means, as in an Ark, when others are perishing in the deluge of his wrath: for, though Believers in the Apostle's time, had not such an extraordinary way of preservation from persecution, as *Nahab* and the few with him had from the flood; Yet, they have a spiritual privilege answerable to it, and of a far better nature; *The life figure whereunto Baptism doth also now save us.* 2. Baptism doth in a spiritual sense resemble the Ark, in so far as few in comparison of the rest of the world, do partake even of that outward Ordinance, as few were in the Ark. In that it is equally distinguished to good and bad, who are within the visible Church; as but such were admitted into the Ark, in that it doth exempt all that partake of it according to Christ's appointment from the common case of the rest of the world, and doth seal to the Elect, safety from that wrath which doth destroy the greatest part of the world: in which, and the like respects, it is here compared with the Ark; *The life figure whereunto Baptism doth also now save us.*

3. Although the spiritual and eternal salvation of be-  
 lievers, be only the effect of the merit of Christ's blood  
 applied to the conscience; Yet, doth the Spirit of Christ  
 in Scripture oftentimes ascribe the same to the instrument  
 or mean by which He doth convey that salvation to  
 them. (compare with this place, *Luke 7. 50. 1 Tim. 3.  
 16.*) that so he may keep up due respect to his own  
 means, which, if they be neglected or despised by them  
 that have the opportunity of them, salvation cannot be  
 expected: Therefore saith the Apostle, *Baptism doth now  
 save us.* 4. There is no small hazard of peoples placing  
 too much in the external and outward part of the Ordina-  
 nances, as if that of it self were of some efficacy for sal-  
 vation; against which the Ministers of Christ have no  
 lesse need to guard in their Doctrine, than against peo-  
 ples undervaluing of the Ordinances: for after that the  
 Apostle hath asserted Baptism, to be the mean of our  
 salvation, answerable to the Ark, lest any might per-  
 swade themselves of salvation, because they had received  
 the external Baptism, he addeth, as a guard, *not the put-  
 ting away of the filth of the flesh.* 5. The internal Baptism,  
 to wit, the application of Christ's merits, is known to be  
 bestowed upon sinners, by the effects thereof upon their  
 conscience: which do appear, first, When they do an-  
 swer to the Lord's offers and commands in the Gospel,  
 by their hearty acceptance of the one, and entering upon  
 in his strength to obey the other. Secondly, When they  
 become humbly familiar with God, in laying claim to  
 the purchase of Christ's death, as theirs. And, thirdly,  
 When they are taught of Him, to answer the accusa-  
 tions and challenges that may be brought against them in  
 doing of the former two: for, all these three which make  
 a good conscience, to wit, stipulation or engagement, claim  
 or challenge, and apology or answer, are in the signifi-  
 cation of this word, which the Apostle makes use of here  
 to expresse the internal part of Baptism, to wit, the ap-  
 plication of Christ's merits by the effect thereof upon  
 the conscience, which is the cause, even for my part, of the

*Section 6.* Christ's Resurrection, is to the Believer one chief ground of this answer of a good conscience formerly described, from whence he may justly claim to absolution from guiltinesse, since his Cautioner's discharge is evidenced by his Resurrection, *Rom. 4. 25.* and to vertue for subduing of his corruptions, since he who purchased it, is risen to apply it, *Rom. 6. 9, 11, 12.* and to through-bearing strength under all trials, since the Head being risen, the Members must needs be where it is, *Joh. 14. 3.* and from thence also may answer all objections drawn from his guiltinesse, and from the strength of his corruptions, and from his weaknesse to go through trials, which might discourage his heart, or brangle his faith, *Rom. 8. 33.* for, here the Apostle sheweth how the Believer hath this answer of a good conscience, to wit, *by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.*

*Verse 22.* Who is gone into Heaven, and is on the right hand of God, Angels, and Authorities, and Powers being made subject unto Him.

The last encouragement to Christians under all their sufferings, hath three branches. First, That since their Head and Mediator is gone in their nature and name to possesse Heaven. Secondly, Since He is in highest dignity and power with God. And, thirdly, Since He hath all the heavenly hosts of Angels at his command, Therefore none of his Followers need to fear suffering in following their duty to Him. Hence *Learn, 1.* Christ's withdrawing of his bodily presence from his People at his Ascension, is so far from being matter of discouragement to them, as the Disciples did mistake it, *Joh. 16. 5, 6.* that by the contrary it is to them a well-spring of much consolation, whence they may with joy draw answers to every discouragement, He being gone to Heaven, that He may pour out of his Spirit more plentifully than He did before His Ascension, *Joh. 7. 39. Eph. 4. 10.* and having in that very act of His Ascension triumphed over

over all our spiritual enemies, *Psal. 68. 18.* and made a patent access to us to enter Heaven by our faith and prayers, since He is gone there in our nature and name, *Heb. 1. 19, 20. & 10. 19.* &c. for, as a consolation against suffering, and ground of the answer of a good conscience, is this brought in; that *Christ is gone into Heaven.* 2. The high esteem and power which Christ, as our Mediator, hath with the Father, signified by his sitting at his right hand, *Eph. 1. 20, &c.* having the fulnesse of grace and glory given Him to dispense to his Redeemed Ones, *Alth. 5. 31.* is another strong ground of Believers consolation, whereby also they have the answer of a good conscience to all challenges given in against them; His sitting there being a clear evidence to them, that the work of their Redemption is compleatly done, *Heb. 10. 11, 12.* that the Father is abundantly satisfied therewith, *Psal. 110. 1. Rom. 8. 33, 34.* for, this is another branch of their encouragement. That *Christ is on the right hand of God.* 3. Whatever be the order, or several degrees that are among the Angels in Heaven, in which we are not curiously to enquire, seeing it is not made known in Scripture. Yet this is sure, That Jesus Christ, not only as He is God, but as He is our Mediator, hath all of them subject to Him, as His Messengers and mighty Hosts, having authority from Him, for the defence and comfort of the Godly, *Psal. 34. 7. Heb. 1. 14.* and for the terror and punishment of His and their enemies, *Psal. 68. 16, 17.* for, of Him, as our Mediator, is this spoken, that He hath *Angels, and Authorities, and Powers subject unto Him.* 4. The consideration of this subjection of all the Angels and heavenly Hosts to Jesus Christ the Mediator, may be very comfortable to the few oppressed Godly. Especially when the Powers and Authorities on Earth, and their Ministers and Hosts are employed against them, as in this troublesome time they were: for, this is here given to Believers, as the last branch of their encouragement in this Chapter. That they serve, and suffer for such a Master, as hath *Angels, and Authorities, and Powers subject unto Him.*



# CHAP. IV.

**I**N this Chapter, (which containeth an enlargement of the former purpose) the Apostle doth, by several arguments, presse upon the Redeemed, the study of holinesse; and giveth them many encouragements against suffering in that way, which are the two principal parts of the Chapter. The sum of the first is, That Believers should renounce the slavery of their sins, first, Because they were esteemed judicially to have suffered for sin in their Cautioner, Christ, ver. 1, 2. Secondly, Because they had already followed too long the filthy fashions of the profane, ver. 3. Thirdly, Because those who did wonder at, and slander them for changing their course and company, behoved to give a sad account thereof to their Judge, ver. 4, 5. Fourthly, Because censure, and opposition from the profane had been the lot of the Saints departed, ver. 6. And, fifthly, Because time was now near an end, Therefore they should keep themselves in a praying disposition, ver. 7. make conscience of love, ver. 8. and of hospitality toward the Saints, ver. 9. and imploy their talents and gifts in their several places, for the glory of Christ, ver. 10, 11.

The sum of the second part, is, That hardest sufferings should not seem strange to Believers: considering, first, that they were sent to try their graces, ver. 12. Secondly, that by them they were made conform to their Master. And, thirdly, should share of his glory, ver. 13. Fourthly, that even reproach for faithfulness to Christ, should prove them happy. Fifthly, that they should be sure of the presence of His Spirit with them. Sixthly, that He did resent their wrongs as done against Himself. Seventhly, that He did esteem Himself glorified by their sufferings, ver. 14. providing they did not procure these sufferings by their miscarriage, ver. 15. but endured them with courage and cheerfulness for the Truth of Christ, ver. 16. Eighthly, that Gods appointed time was now

Chapter 4. *How the Church is purified by such his persecution, that even the Godly could not come to Heaven but with great difficulty. And lastly, that the end of their ungodly persecutions behoved to be unspeakably blessed.* ver. 17, 18. It was therefore their best, so commend themselves to Him, whose power and faithfulness is engaged to bear them through all their trials, ver. 19.

*Verf. 1. Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for, he that hath suffered in the flesh, hath ceased from sin.*

THE Apostle's scope, in the first part of this Chapter, being to stir up the Redeemed of the Lord, to fight against sin, and to give themselves wholly away to the obedience of their Redeemer, as appears from ver. 2. and 7, &c. he brings his first and principal argument for that purpose, from Christ's sufferings for them, and their interest in these sufferings; The sum whereof is, That seeing Jesus Christ had in their name and name suffered the wrath due to them for their sins, they ought to put on this very same consideration, as a compleat armor against all temptations, and that because Believers being esteemed judicially to have suffered in their Cautioner, they are thereby strongly obliged to desist from those sins for which Christ hath suffered, and for which they are accounted to have suffered in Him: So that the last clause of this verse, cannot be understood of Christ, who never sinned; but of the Believer, who is reckoned a sufferer in Christ, and to have ceased from sin, in regard of Christ's undertaking to make him cease from it, and of the obligation that Christ's suffering in his room putteth upon him to mortifie it, which makes the matter as certain as if it were done; and therefore the Apostle speaketh of it in the bypast time, as if it were already done. *Verse 2.* They that would make use of Christ's sufferings for them, as a motive to suffer for him, must learn to make use of them for mortifying of their lusts, by faith drawing virtue out of

his death, for weakening the love of sin in their hearts, the strength and vigor whereof is the main thing that makes Christians shift a croſſe for Chriſt, and indispoſes them for carrying it aright, *Mat. 16. 24.* for, the Apoſtle, having taught Believers, in the laſt part of the former Chapter, to make uſe of Chriſt's ſufferings for them, as a motive and encouragement to ſuffer for Him, he doth here teach them to make a further uſe of His ſufferings, as neceſſary to be joyned with the former, if ſo be they would attain unto it, to-wit, that by faith they ſhould draw vertue from his ſufferings for mortification of their corruptions; *Forasmuch then as Chriſt hath ſuffered, arm your ſelves, &c.* 2. Chriſt our Mediator hath taken true fleſh upon Him, and in it hath ſuffered all that wrath which was due to the Elect for their ſins; So that His ſufferings were not to be a pattern only to Chriſtians, of a right way of ſuffering, but they were in the room and place of the Elect, as is clearly imported in this ground which the Apoſtle layeth down in the beginning of this Chapter, from whence he is to infer and preſſe upon Believers the ſtudy of mortification; *Chriſt hath ſuffered for us in the fleſh.* 3. As thoſe for whom Chriſt hath ſuffered in the fleſh, and who cannot therefore be overcome by their ſpiritual enemies, *Col. 2. 15.* muſt not ſtanding, make them for a battel and a fighting-life with thoſe enemies; So, they are of themſelves naked, and without armor for this ſpiritual warfare, till they receive the ſame from Jeſus Chriſt; and not only ſo, but they are often found ſecure, and forgetful of their warfare, and therefore have need to be rouled up to lay hold upon their ſpiritual armor, and to accept of the ſame from Jeſus Chriſt, as is imported in this military exhortation, *Arm your ſelves.* 4. The Believer's beſt armor againſt his ſpiritual enemies, eſpecially temptations to ſin, is the believing conſideration of Chriſt's ſufferings in his name and nature, which cannot but give him courage and ſtrength in the battel, ſeing by theſe ſufferings of Chriſt for him, his ſpiritual enemies are ſpoiled of all

all power of overcoming, though not of molesting; and so he may be sure of victory, 1 Cor. 15. 55, 56, 57. For, with this same very consideration or notion (as the word signifieth) that Christ hath suffered in our room and nature, the Apostle exhorteth Believers to arm themselves against all temptations; *Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm your selves also with the same mind.* 5. What-ever sufferings were inflicted upon Christ, the same are judicially reckoned to be inflicted upon Believers in Him, He being their Surety, *Heb.* 7. 22, and a common person representing them all, *Rom.* 5. 18, 19: for, the Apostle, having in the first part of the verse, asserted Christ's sufferings for Believers, in the close of it, he designs the Believer as if he had suffered in his own person; *He that hath suffered in the flesh.* 6. None that do truly believe their union with, and interest in suffering Christ Jesus, can continue in the slavery and servitude of sin, they being, by their believing of their union with Him who suffered for them, certified of the mortification of sin, *Rom.* 6. 6. and so encouraged in the battle against it; and by His love, manifested in his suffering, powerfully constrained never to take pleasure in that which put Him to so much pain, and doth so much grieve his holy Spirit, *2 Cor.* 5. 14, 15. Therefore the Apostle speaketh of their ceasing from sin, as a thing already done in regard of the certainty of it, and their obligation to it, it being ordinary in Scripture to affirm the duty of Believers, as already done by them, thereby to assure them that it shall be done, and to oblige them the more strongly to the study of it, *Col.* 3. 9, 10. *He that hath suffered in the flesh, hath ceased from sin.*

Verf. 2. *That he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh, to the lusts of men, but to the will of God.*

In this Verse, the Apostle expresseth the end of Christ's sufferings, and of Believers interest therein: the wherein whereof, should be their constant aim, to wit, that

more of their time in this mortal state should be spent in the service of those lusts; whereas corrupt men and such unregenerate men; but that their life and time should be wholly spent in conforming themselves to the will of God, who gave Christ to suffer for them: whereby it appears, that the *ceasing from sin*, spoken of in the former Verse, must be understood of the Believers obligation to the study of mortification of it, and of Christ's undertaking to make him cease from it, as the original word there used, signifieth. Hence *Learn*, 1. Whoever believes that Christ hath suffered for them, should think themselves thereby obliged, not to give the least part of their life or time in the flesh to the service of their lusts, or to take the least part thereof from obedience to the will of God, but to employ the same intirely and wholly in the mortifying of sin, wherein they should have no more pleasure than if they were dead men; and in conforming themselves to the will of God in doing and suffering; which should be the great businesse of their life, considering that their time is short, and their strength, while they are in this flesh, but small, which is here insinuated as a reason of this truth: for, this the Apostle makes the end of the Believers union with suffering Christ, and the use that he should make of this privilege, that Christ hath suffered for him, and that he is esteemed to have suffered in Christ, to wit, that *he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh, to the lusts of men, but to the will of God*. 2. Christians cannot but be slaves to their own unmortified corruptions, and servants to the lusts one of another, making it their very trade of life so to do, until they do by faith arm themselves with the consideration of Christ's undertaking to deliver them from that servitude, and of his purchasing virtue by his death for this end: for, while the Apostle exhorteth them thus to arm themselves, that they might no longer live to the lusts of men, he doth clearly import, that before that time they had been slaves; and until they do so, they would not have the rest of their time in the flesh, to be

lasts of men. 3. Then it is made cleare to the Believers that Christ hath suffered for him, and that he is reckoned to have satisfied Gods justice, in Christ his Causeth. when by faith he draweth vertue from Christ, to make him selfe as the mortifying of his corruptions, and in conformity to the revealed will of God in deam and practice: for this may be looked upon as the cleare mark of those, who may conclude that Christ hath suffered for them in the flesh, and who are esteemed to have suffered in him, that they have now ceased from sin, and do live no longer to the lusts of men, but as the will of God.

Verf. 3. For the time past of our life may suffice us to have brought the will of the Gentiles; when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, and excess of wine, rebellings, haughtines, and abominable idolatries.

The second argument, whereby the Apostle presseth upon Believers the study of holinesse, especially that part of it which consists in the mortifying of sin, is, That they had given too much of their time already to the service of their lusts, wallowing themselves in all sort of vilenesse, against both Tables of the Law, after the manner of the Heathens, among whom they were scattered, whereof the Apostle giveth here some instances. The first is, *Lasciviousness*, whereby is meant lightness, effeminate and wantonnesse in sin, as is contrary to sobernesse and honesty. The second he calleth *Lusts*, which signifies those strong and burning desires which are in unrepented hearts after more and more wickednesse, especially their sinfull pleasures. The third, fourth, and fifth, point out their excesse in drinking and bawling, along with their shamelesse and uncomely carriages, while they kept up a sinfull society together. And the last is, the idolatry or false worship, in a speciall way directed to God. In all which steps, and others of this kind, they having too long walked already, they ought to

But now to think it more than time to break off this course, and to consecrate the remnant of their time to the study of holiness, for His honour, whom they had formerly so much dishonoured. Hence *Learn*, 1. Whenever the Lord makes a gracious change upon the hearts of sinners, they will be so far from putting off and delaying the forsaking of their sins till afterwards, that they will with grief look back upon the time they have already given way to them, as very long, and too long to have been employed that way: so, that they who mind to live any longer in the course of their sins, have no ground to think that they have yet met with the power of converting grace, seeing they say in substance that they have not yet taken time enough to dishonour God, and destroy their own soul: for, this is the sad language of every real Convert; *The time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles.* 2. The longer that sinners have continued in the course of their sins, and the greater height of wickedness they have been at before their conversion, the more eagerly should they sit about the mortifying of sin, and the more assiduous and serious should they be in the study of holiness after their conversion, that so they may, so far as they can, restore the Lord to his honour, *1 Cor. 15. 9, 10.* reclaim, if it be possible, some of those whom formerly they have hardened in their sin, *Gal. 1. 11.* and get their own hearts loosed from the love of those sins, which long continuance and custom have deeply rooted in them, *Jer. 13. 23.* for the Apostle makes this a reason why Believers should give no part of their life, or time, to the service of their lusts, but employ the same wholly in obedience to the Lord: that they had spent so much thereof in the slavery of sin already, and had been at so great a height in wickedness; *For the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, &c.* 3. Jesus Christ hath suffered for, and conferred his saving grace upon some of the vilest of the children of men, that He may proclaim his grace and

love to be most free, by bestowing it upon them, who have nothing in them but what is loathsome in his sight, and most powerful in coming over, and doing away so much vileness, and adorning the soul where it was with his beautiful grace: for, the Apostle clearly supposeth both himself and other Converts, for whom Christ had suffered in the flesh, to have been really such as are here described, *working the will of the Gentiles, walking in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, &c.* 4. It doth much concern all true Converts, to entertain in their hearts the lively apprehension of the several steps of their former vileness, wherein they have wallowed themselves before their conversion, that they may be still vile in their own eyes, considering how dishonourable to God they have sometimes been, and may have their hearts frequently raised in the praises of Him who hath graciously pardoned, and powerfully changed them; 1 Tim. 1. 13, 14, and may manifest much compassion and meekness in their carriage toward those who yet remain in that condition wherein themselves once were, Tit. 2. 2, 3, for, here the Apostle representeth to his own heart, and the hearts of other Converts, the several branches of that profane disposition and course wherein they had lived before their conversion, to wit, that they had *worked the will of the Gentiles, walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, &c.* 5. True penitents will not stand to proclaim and aggravate their own vileness, when it may serve for the glory of Christ's free grace, in pardoning and changing of them, and may provoke others to mortification and holiness: for, here the Apostle puts himself in the catalogue of these, who had walked in *lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, &c.* 6. They who would reflect aright upon their disposition and carriage before their conversion, should not only make their sins gross practices, but the very inward motions and lusts of their hearts toward those sins which possibly they have never committed, and consider with what strong bias and force they have been inclined to, or did commit those



iniquities; and call to mind the several sins of their sin  
 against both Tables of the Law, such as their abusing  
 of God's good creatures so be fewel to their lusts; their  
 following the example of others, their serving of others  
 or hardening of them in their sins by evil example; their  
 forsaking, or corrupting of the right Worship of God;  
 and the like: that by the distinct and clear up-taking of  
 all, they may be the more humble, and the more pro-  
 voked to praise God; and to be diligent in their duty;  
 for, such a representation is here given to Converts, of  
 their former disposition and carriage, that they had in  
 time past *brought* (with great intention and benefit of  
 spirit; as the word signifieth) *the will of the Gentiles* (by  
 following their examples, serving and encouraging them  
 in their sins) *walking in outward vileness*, and inward  
*lusts, in exesse of wine*, and such other grosse sins against  
 the second Table; and in *abominable idolatries*, against the  
 first Table. 7. Where the love of sin is entertained in  
 the heart, and profanity given way to, in the practice,  
 contrary to the second Table, there is ordinarily joyned  
 therewith; 1. forsaking or corrupting of the right Wor-  
 ship of God, contrary to the first; A spirit of strong de-  
 lusion in the matters of Religion and God's Worship,  
 being the ordinary and just plague of God, upon those  
 who frame not their heart and manners according to the  
 Rule of the Word, 2 *Thess.* 2. 10, 11, 12. for, this is the last  
 influence of their profane course, and may be taken for  
 the consequent of the rest; that having *walked in lusts, ex-  
 cess of wine, &c.* they did also *walk in abominable idola-  
 tries*. 8. As every sin is hateful to the Lord, *Psal.* 45. 7.  
 and should for that cause be so to all his People, *Zech.* 8.  
*vs.* 20. he hath a special detestation of the sin of idola-  
 try; whether that more grosse kind of it, whereby that  
 external Worship which is due to God, is any way given  
 to a creature, *Exod.* 32. 5. *Psal.* 106. 19, 40. or that which  
 is more spiritual, whereby the affections of the heart are  
 pointed out excessively upon any thing beside God;  
 which is never so lawful in it self, *Gal.* 3. 5. Therefore is

this Epistle expressly added to the last. they of their wicked course here mentioned, *abominable idolatry.*

- Verf. 4. Wherein they think it strange that you run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you :*  
*5. Who shall give account to Him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead.*

Followeth a third argument, whereby the Apostles pressed the study of holiness upon Believers, and removed a great discouragement out of their way. The first whereof is, That however they who had now changed their course and company might expect to be made a wonder to the profane, and disgraced by them: so far as they could, for not joyning with them in their profane courses formerly described; Yet this ought to be no discouragement to the Godly in the way of holiness, in regard that these their mockers and persecutors behaved shortly to give a strict and sad account of their way to the Judge of all. Hence *Learn, 1.* Men that are left of God to live in any sinful course, are very unwilling that any should part company with them in their way, and are strongly desirous to have others infected with their sins, that so there might be none to make them ashamed, and many to encourage them in their evil way. *2.* For, so much is imported in this, that *they think it strange that others run not with them to the same excess of riot.* 3. Were the course of profane men never so vile and even such as Nature's light cannot but condemn, yet is it to them matter of great admiration that any should avoid the course which they follow, because they apprehend a paradise in the satisfaction of their lusts. 4. 13. and the true sweetness which is in Christ, which is wholly hid from them, *Prov. 14. 10.* Therefore they think it strange that others run not with them to the same excess of riot. 5. It doth not satiate graceless persons to go at leisure in the way to their own destruction, being misled by that violent spirit of Satan, they are

the halt they can toward their own race, as men in a race do for a great prize, as the word here signifies; and will not spare to spend their bodies and spirits, and waste their means in the service of their lusts, and cannot be satisfied with any that will not do the like, as is imported in the signification of these words, *They think it strange that ye run not with them to the same end of the race.*

4. Profane men cannot abide that the Godly should be in credit and reputation beside them, partly, because of their natural enmity against them, Gal. 4. 29. and partly, because their way is a shame and reproof to theirs, as Christ's was to his enemies, Joh. 7. 7. therefore they devise and spread false calumnies, to hurt the credit (as the word here signifies) of the Godly; *speaking evil of you.* 5. Even the Godly are so little mortified to their credit before the world, and do so little prize esteem with God, and his People, that the mockery and slanders even of profane men, are ready to prove great discouragement to them in the wayes of the Lord: for, the Spirit of God finds it necessary here, to guard against this discouragement, by discovering of it, and threatening the slanderers; *They think strange that ye run not with them, &c. speaking evil of you. who shall give account, &c.* 6. Although the saving grace of Christ doth not loose those, upon whom it is vouchsafed, from the relations they may have to graceless persons, nor from the duties of those relations, neither yet from fellowship with them in necessary commanded duties, 1 Cor. 5. 9. 10. and 7. 12. 13. 1 Sam. 11. 6. 7. 2 Cor. 11. 20. &c. Yet it will make them separate from their sinfull fashions, and leave their company in their sinfull courses, even though they should be wooed at, and evil spoken of for so doing: for, the Apostle importeth clearly, that those Converts, to whom he speaks, would not now keep fellowship with their former companions in their sinfull courses, what ever they might suffer at their hands, while he saith, *They think it strange that ye run not with them to the same end of the race.* Although a long-suffering God may let wicked men have

a long

a long time of prospering in their sinful wayes, and per-  
secuting of his beloved People; yea, and may defer his  
reckoning with them the whole length of their time, Yea,  
of necessity, they must all of them at last appear before  
Him as their Judge, at the great day, when both those  
of them that have died before that time, and such as  
shall then be found living, must be present, to give account  
to Him, that judgeth quick and dead. 8. The delay of  
the last reckoning with wicked men, is not, because the  
Lord is not ready for that work, but, because there is yet  
a number of the Elect to be gathered, Rev. 6. 11. their  
faith and patience is to be tried, Rev. 14. 12. and the  
wicked to be more ripened for judgement, Rev. 14. 15. So  
that there is nothing upon the Lord's part that hindereth  
the day of account; for, He is ready to judge the quick and  
the dead. 9. So dear are the Lord's People to Him, and  
so exact is He in his justice, that there is not a thought  
in wicked mens hearts, nor a word in their mouths con-  
trary to Him, or his People, but He takes notice of it,  
and will exact a strict account thereof from them: for,  
here the Spirit of God, signifieth His notice-taking in  
their admiring thoughts of the Godly, and their ill  
speeches of them, and assureth His own, that for these  
they shall give account to Him, who is ready to judge the quick  
and the dead. 10. Although the Children of the Lord  
should not desire a wofull day upon the most wicked, for  
any personal injury, they have received from them, Jer.  
17. 16. nor rejoyce when it comes upon them, because  
they are their enemies, Prov. 24. 17. but rather should  
pray for their conversion and salvation, Mat. 5. 44. Yea,  
it is both lawful and necessary for the Lord's suffering  
People to consider how glorious the Lord will be in his  
justice upon so many of them as are irrecoverable, and  
without the compasse of his electing love; and thereby  
ought to comfort their hearts against their bitter men-  
ders, and other injuries of that kind: for, this is here  
given as an encouraging motive to the study of bene-  
volence, notwithstanding of any discouragement from justice.

that they shall give account to Him, that is ready to judge the quick and the dead.

*Verf. 6. For, for this cause was the Gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit.*

The fourth argument to constancy in holiness, notwithstanding of any discouragement from the profane world, is, That seeing the Gospel had been preached to the Saints who are now at their rest, for this very end, that they being exercised in their external condition with the hard censures and persecution of the profane, might have the life of grace promoted in their hearts, and so be fitted for life eternal; there was therefore no reason why the Lord's People should be discouraged in that way, because of such a lot as all the Saints departed had met with. *Dott. 1.* All that believe the Gospel, and give up themselves to the obedience of it, may resolve to have many hard censures past upon them by those that do not profit by it, to be judged by them, a deceived and accursed people, *Job. 7. 47, 49.* a proud and precise company who will not do as neighbour and others do, *Mark 7. 2, 5.* to have many false calumnies raised and spread of them, *Rom. 3. 8.* and to be condemned to the worst usage that wicked men can bring upon them, *Jam. 5. 6.* for, this is here set down as the lot of the Saints departed, and the consequent of their embracing the Gospel. *For, for this cause the Gospel was preached to them that are dead, that they may be judged according to men in the flesh.* 2. Although the Gospel of it self tend to the making of peace both with God, and amongst those that hear it, *Rom. 10. 14. Luke 19. 42.* and the Lord doth no wayes approve profane mens censuring, or condemning them that embrace it, *Luke 10. 6.* Yet doth the Lord send the Gospel amongst men for this very end, that upon occasion of his Peoples embracing of it, wicked men may vent their natural enmity against Him, by their persecuting of His People.

that so they may be justly punished for their sins, and His own People may be exercised by their opposition, for their good; which are just and holy ends upon God's part; For, *for this cause was the Gospel preached to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men, &c.* 3. It giveth much encouragement to the Lords People in the way of their duty against all discouragements from the profane; to consider, first, That they are not singular in a suffering lot, seeing the same hath fallen to the Saints before, in whose person God hath given a proof of His power and good-will to bear His own through all their trials. Secondly, That their troubles from wicked men, can reach no further than their flesh, or outward man, and the concerns thereof. Thirdly, That those troubles can continue no longer than their dwelling in the flesh. And, fourthly, That all their hard exercises are carved out not by the lusts of men, but by the holy and wise providence of God: for these considerations are here presented to the Godly for their encouragement against the mockery and persecution of the profane, that the same had been the lot of the Saints now departed, that it was measured out by the Lord, that it could only reach their flesh, and them only while they were in frail flesh, as is imported in these words; For, *for this cause was the Gospel preached to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh.* 4. Gods great end in sending and keeping up the Gospel among His own, is, That they being quickened by His Spirit, which He communicates to them through the preaching of the Gospel, *Gal. 3. 2.* may be enabled to live the life of faith, *Job. 30. 31.* and holiness, *2 Cor. 3. 18.* and may have also a life of consolation here, *1 Job. 1. 4.* and a life of glory hereafter, *1 Job. 5. 13.* All which is imported in this great end of preaching of the Gospel to the Lords People, *That they might live according to God in the spirit.* 5. The life of grace and of consolation could not thrive so well in the hearts of the Godly, nor could they be fitted for the life of glory, except they were

with trials and opposition from the wicked of the world, to stir them up to the exercise of their graces. *Rom. 8. 3.* and to cry for a further measure of it. *Psal. 119. 25.* to loose their hearts from this life, and make them long for a better. *2 Cor. 5. 2.* For, for this cause the Gospel was preached to the Saints departed; that they might be judged according to men in the flesh; but (by the blessing of God upon the Gospel, and upon their hard exercise from the wicked) might live according to God in the spirit.

*Verf. 7. But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober and watch unto prayer.*

The fifth argument to the study of holiness, notwithstanding of discouragements in the way thereof, is. That wicked mens opposition, and the Godlies sufferings, and all things of that nature would shortly be at an end; from which, together with the former arguments, the Apostle inferreth seven directions for attaining to a right carriage in duty, under so much opposition from wicked men; whereof three are comprehended in this Verse; The first is, That they should manifest moderation and prudence in their disposition and carriage. The second is, That they should be much with God in prayer. The third is, That they should carefully watch against every thing that might mar their intercourse with God in that duty. Hence *Learn. 1.* It cannot now be long to the end of time, and all things in it, whether we compare the remainder of time, with that which is already past, or the whole of it, with eternity; or, whether we consider how near the end of time, and all things in it, is to every particular person: in all which respects, the Apostle expressly asserts here, that *the end of all things is at hand.* 2. The Lord's People could not faint in their duty, nor be discouraged because of opposition in the way of it, if they did entertain the believing consideration of the nearness of the end of wicked mens persecution, and of their pains in duty and sufferings for it; for, this is here given as an encourage-

encouraging argument to constancy in duty, notwithstanding of opposition in the way thereof; *That the end of all things is at hand*, 13. They that would carry themselves aright under much discouraging opposition in the ways of the Lord, and would keep themselves in a fit disposition for meeting with Him at the end of all things, must study sobriety, which consists in a strict esteem of our selves for our gifts or graces, *Rom. 12. 3.* in the exercise of right reason, and Christian prudence in compassing our affairs, *Mark 5. 15.* and in a spare-meeting with such earthly delights, as may indispose us for our christian warfare, *1 Thes. 5. 8.* for, this is the first particular direction, which the Apostle gives for a right carriage in duty under opposition, and which he inserteth upon the nearness of the end of all things, as the way to be prepared for the same; *Be ye therefore sober*, 41. None can hold out in their duty, when they meet with discouragement in the way of it, nor can keep themselves in a right disposition for the end of all things, but those only who keep much correspondency with God by prayer; in which exercise His People receive from Him light and strength to carry themselves aright; and encouragement against all that might discourage them in His way; for, this is the second thing recommended to them that would persevere in their duty, even under opposition, and be fit for the end of all things; that they should *Watch unto prayer*, 9. None can expect acceptance, or success of their prayers, except they joyn therewith watchfulness, that so they may furnish themselves beforehand with matter for prayer, *Psal. 5. 2.* that they may discern, and make use of the fittest opportunities for the discharge of that duty, *Psal. 54. 17.* that they may eschew in their ordinary carriage what may mar their access to God in prayer, and the return of the same, *1 Pet. 3. 7.* and may carefully observe what answers of their former prayers they have from God, *Hab. 2. 1.* for, in order to this duty, and as a necessary pre-requisite of it, watchfulness is here pressed, *Watch unto prayer*, 10.

Ver.



Verf. 8. *And above all things have fervent charity among your selves : for, charity shall cover the multitude of sins.*

The fourth direction to the Lord's People for attaining to a right carriage under so much opposition from the profane, which the Apostle inferreth from the former arguments to the study of holinesse, especially that taken from Christ's love to His own, manifested in his sufferings, is, That they would labour for fervency of affection one towards another ; and this the Apostle presseth with great earnestnesse, as the sum and chief of all the duties we owe to our neighbour ; and bears it in by this argument, That love will prevent and passe many mutual wrongs, which cannot but mar comfortable society among the Lord's People. Hence *Learn*, 1. Next unto our love to the Lord Jesus, which is the first and great Command in the Law, *Mat. 22. 38.* Love to His People ought to be studied above all other things, it being the main evidence of our love to Him, *1 Job. 5. 1.* and of His love to us, *1 Job. 3. 14.* and that which makes way for every other duty to our neighbour, *1 Cor. 13. 4.* for, the Apostle supposing love to Christ, to be in the hearts of those to whom he writes, *Chap. 1. 8.* doth presse this love to others of His People in the next room, as that which should have the precedency of any other duty ; *Above all things have fervent charity among your selves.* 2. They that love Christ, should not only entertain love in their own hearts to others of His People, what-ever their estate or condition be, but should likewise labour to procure and cherish hearty love in and among all the rest of God's People : for, this direction, as it presseth upon every one of the Lord's People, love towards one another, so it presseth upon every one of them the entertaining and promoting of mutual love among others ; *Have fervent charity among your selves.* 3. The more hatred and opposition the Children of the Lord meet with from the profane world, the more warmnesse of affection should they

they entertain and expresse towards one another, that in the comfort they have in one anothers affection, may make up to them the discouragement they have from their wicked enemies : for, while this People were exposed to many discouragements from the profane, as is clear from the former words, the Apostle with great earnestnesse, presseth them to this, as that which would sweeten their sad lot ; *Above all things have fervent charity among your selves.* 4. It is not enough that the Lords People keep themselves free of malice and hatred one of another ; neither yet, that they have such a measure of affection toward one another, as they ought to have toward all men, *Tit. 3. 2.* Yea, even their very enemies, *Mat. 5. 44.* but they must beware of all cold-risenesse of affection one toward another, and labour for such a height of love as may keep them alwayes in a benel to do one another good, and such as may not be interrupted by the failings one of another : for, such a measure of affection is here pressed by the Apostle in these words, wherein there is a metaphor from a Bow that is bended ; *Have fervent charity among your selves.* 5. None of the Children of the Lord have ground to expect such a society of His People to converse with in this life, in whom they may not discern many failings and wrongs, and those often reiterated both against God, and against one another, which cannot but mar the benefit and comfort of their society, unlesse one of them can pardon and passe-by a multitude of such in others : for, this argument doth import, that there will be among the Saints, *a multitude of sins to be covered.* 6. Although the Lords People ought not to justifie or connive at the faults one of another, *Lev. 19. 17.* but with zeal and meeknesse to point them out to them, and reprove them, *Gal. 2. 11.* which should be much desired, and well taken by one of them from another, *Psal. 141. 5.* Yet, where true love is, it will not be interrupted by the discerning of these, but will cover them, by pardoning the wrong done to the person that hath love, *Eyb. 4. 32.* interceding with



be without house or harbour, or any such worldly accommodations of their own, and to be put to live upon the charity of others: for, in such a case are several of the Lord's People here supposed to be, while the Apostle commandeth them to *use hospitality one towards another.* 2. The Lord doth not ordinarily bring all of His People in a like hard condition at once, but in hardest times useth to keep some of them in a capacity to be helpful, and comfortable to others: for, while there are some that want lodging and accommodation of their own, there are others of His People that have these things to give to such as want them, as is supposed in this exhortation, *Use hospitality one to another.* 3. Although humane Law do not bind Christians to the duties of charity, nor punish them for the neglect thereof; yet the Supreme Law-giver hath enjoined these duties as strictly as any other, and therefore, no question, will be ascribable to the neglecters of these duties, as of any other duties, *Mat. 25. 44.* for, this Text is the poor right to a share of the accommodations and society of the rich, and the Lords order to the rich, for giving the same to the poor; *Use hospitality one to another.* 4. Duties of charity to the Lord's People in necessity, ought to be done without fretting or male-contentment, either at the poor as being burthensom, or at God's providence for casting so many objects of charity in our way; and consequently they ought to be gone about willingly and pleasantly, considering, that the Lord esteemeth of them as done to Himself, *Prov. 19. 17.* and that He delighteth exceedingly in our chearfull performance of such duties as are expensive to us, *2 Cor. 9. 7.* for, thus doth the Apostle qualifie the right manner of performing this duty of hospitality, that it be used *without grudging.*

*Ver. 10. As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.*

The sixth direction which the Apostle inferreth upon the former arguments, is, That they would mutually communicate all their receipts for the glory of Christ, and the good of others: and this he preleth by two arguments: The one is, That what-ever they had, was a free-gift, flowing from the grace of God. The other is, That they were not absolute owners, but dispensers, or stewards of those various gifts and graces of God. Hence *Learn, 1.* There are none of the Lord's People but they have received some gifts from Him, which being rightly employed, may be made forth-coming for His glory, and the good of others of His People: this is supposed while the Apostle thus exhorts, *As every man hath received the gift, so let him minister the same, &c.* that God in all things may be glorified. *2.* It hath pleased the Lord to dispense His gifts variously among His People, giving to some more talents, and to some fewer, *Mat. 25. 15.* and different measures of the same gifts to several persons, *Rom. 12. 3.* that all may know, all fulnesse is only in Himself, *Col. 1. 19.* and that every one may make use of that gift, or degree of gift in another which themselves want, *1 Cor. 12. 21.* for, this variety of the Lord's dispensing of His gifts, is imported in this direction of the Apostle's, while he thus exhorts in the beginning of the Verse, *As every man hath received the gift, &c.* and while he calleth those gifts, in the latter part of the Verse, *the manifold grace of God.* *3.* What-ever gift or talent any of the Lord's People have, that may be any way usefull for His glory, and the good of others, that is a free-gift to them, flowing from the undeserved grace of God, there being nothing foreseen or found in any that can merit the least good at Gods hand, *Rom. 11. 35.* as is clearly held forth in the signification of this word, *As every man hath received*

*the*

the Gift. 4. None of the Lord's People have received any gift from Him, for themselves alone, but that they may lay forth the same for His glory, and the good of others, as is imported in this direction, *As every man hath received the gift, so let him minister the same.* 5. The Children of the Lord have much need of His Spirit, that they may discern the gifts they have received, and so may know what is freely bestowed upon them, 1 Cor. 2. 12, that they may neither undervalue their receipts as useless, and so hide their talents in a napkin, nor yet take upon them what they are not able for, but may put forth their gifts in their stations, for the glory of God, and others good, suitably to the measure they have received, *As every man hath received the gift, so let him minister the same.* 6. All our receipts ought to be communicated with much diligence and activity, as also with humble condescendency to profit those that are inferiour to us, as being in that, servants to others: for, both *diligence*, and *condescendency*, are imported in the signification of this word, *Let him minister the same.* 7. The consideration of the freedom of God's grace in bestowing any of His gifts, should strongly move all His People heartily to lay out the same for His glory, and the good of others: for, that we may never think upon any of our receipts but as free-gifts, and thereby may be moved to communicate the same, the Spirit of the Lord hath put such a name upon them here, as in the Original signifieth a *gift of grace*, and a gift whereby others may be gratified; *As every man hath received the gift.* 8. The Lord's People are not to look upon themselves as owners of any gifts they have, so as they may use the same at their pleasure, but as dispensators and stewards, as the word here signifies, who ought to dispose of their receipts according to the mind and direction of the giver of them, communicating the same seasonably and with discretion, considering the several tempers of the rest of the family, to whom they are to give out these gifts, and faithfully, as those that must give account, how they have employed all that they have received.

received, as good stewards, use to do: All which is im-  
ported in the manner of Christians dispensing of their  
gifts, here held forth in a metaphor, as good stewards of  
the manifold grace of God.

Ver. 11. If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of  
God: If any man minister, let him do it as of the ability  
which God giveth, that God in all things may be glorified  
through Jesus Christ; to whom be praise and dominion  
for ever and ever. Amen.

The last direction, is concerning the right manner of  
communicating their receipts: for which the Apostle  
giveth two instances. The first is, aient the communi-  
cation of things spiritual, which are to be communicated  
by word: and for that, he exhorteth that it be done  
(whether by publick Ministers, or private Christians in  
their stations (with that reverence and confidence which  
is fitable to the majesty and certainty of divine Truths.  
The second is, concerning the right way of communi-  
cating things temporal: and for this he exhorteth, that  
those be given forth (whether by all Christians, whom  
charity obligeth to supply one anothers necessities, or by  
those who have an Office in the House of God, to gather  
and distribute the charity of the rest) in a way fitable  
to every ones ability, and with such a willing and cheer-  
ful frame of spirit as the Lord vouchsafes upon them;  
and withall he proposeth the right end that Christians  
should have before them, in all their duties, and especi-  
ally in this, the communication of their receipts, to wit,  
the glorifying of God through Jesus Christ: upon the  
promoting whereof the Apostles heart rises, to ascribe  
eternal praise to him, wherewith the first part of the  
Chapter is closed. Hence Learn. 1. All that speak any  
thing to others of the matters of God (as private Chris-  
tians in a private way may do, for their natural edifica-  
tion, *1 Cor. 14. 26.* *Mat. 23. 16.* especially to those un-  
der their charge, *1 Tim. 5. 4.*) more especially, those who  
have

have an Office in the Ministry of God for that end, ought to study the right manner of delivering themselves of God; that they speak nothing but what they understand to be clearly persuaded to be His Truth, as the word here signifies; that they speak the same with plainness, that there may be no ground for people to doubt of the meaning, as ordinarily there is of Satan's oracles, which uttering doubts and ambiguous; that they speak seasonably, with reverence & humility as becometh the mind of God. All which is imported in this direction, prescribing the right manner of communicating spiritual receipts, which is to be done by speech. *If any man speak, let him speak as the Oracles of God.* 2. As every Christian ought willingly to give out of his worldly substance for the supply of the necessities of others of the Lord's People, and also with due consideration how far his ability may reach; for, as his charity may neither be unsuitable to the Lord's liberality towards him, 1 Cor. 16. 2. nor prejudicial to the ties of equity, Rom. 13. 8. especially to those of his many relations, 1 Tim. 5. 8. So those who have an Office in the House of God for gathering and distributing the duties of others, ought to discharge the same with faithfulness and diligence, cheerfully going about the business of their office: for this last part of the Apostle's direction may be understood both of the Deacons, and of every private Christian, and likewise of the propagation which should be, betwixt their charity, and their ability; as also, of their stretching themselves to the utmost of the grace given unto them, to do those duties of charity in a right manner; *If any man minister, let him do it as of ability, which God giveth.* 3. As there is a great propensity in all men naturally, whereof the Regenerate are not free, to seek their own glory, especially in the giving out of their receipts, as is imported in the Apostle's proposing this end to Believers in the communication of their gifts, that God may be glorified: So, none can use capably employ their best gifts, unless their main end be, that God be glorified; both by the use



of the Spirit, and by those that are profited by  
 them, the giving such gifts to men; and the heart to  
 desire that for so holy an end as this, that God in all things  
 may be glorified. 4. As every gift we have, comes to us  
 through Jesus Christ, *Joh. 1. 16.* So, all the glory that  
 redounds to God by the right use of these gifts, must be  
 given to Him, (whether by the dispenser of them, or  
 those who are profited by them) through Jesus Christ  
 in whose hands they are rightly employed, *Joh. 15. 5.*  
 who makes His People intend the glory of God in all  
 things, *1Co. 6. 2.* & *Joh. 17. 10.* and makes their intention  
 to glorify Him, accepted by His merits, *Heb. 12. 15.* for  
 the glorifying of God, which is here proposed, as the  
 end to be intended both by them that let out their gifts  
 to others, and by those to whom they are dispensed, must  
 be through Jesus Christ, *That God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ.* 5. Although the essential  
 glory of God be so infinitely great, that it can receive no  
 addition, *Nak. 9. 5.* and His dominion in itself so ab-  
 solute and large, that it cannot be increased, *Joh. 17. 10.* yet  
 it is the duty of all His People, especially His Ministers,  
 to intend the glory of His, so will that it may be ascrib-  
 ed to Him by all; and that His dominion may be vo-  
 luntarily acknowledged and submitted to by all: for so  
 saith the Apostle here, *To Him be glory and dominion*  
*for ever.* 6. So full of desires, to have Christ glorified and  
 submitted unto by others, should the hearts of all that  
 love Him, especially His Ministers, be; that they should  
 be ready to intermix other purposes, and burst forth in  
 the words thereby to provoke others to that duty: for  
 saith the Apostle here, *To Him be glory and dominion*  
*for ever.* 7. Our desires to have the glory of the Lord  
 manifested, and His dominion over all acknowledged  
 and voluntarily submitted unto, should reach the hearts of  
 all men; in regard we are obliged to Him by favours  
 infinitely more, for which we will never be able to  
 do Him the glory due to Him, *To Him be glory and dominion*  
*for ever.* 8. We ought to raise our hearts to praise

by the consideration of the Lord's faithfulness in performing of His Promises, and so close this exercise in the time with the hearty acknowledgment thereof; and with our faithfull engaging of our selves to glorifie Him, by believing of His faithfulness: for, this is the true word; *Amen*, signifying faithfulness, used in all languages, importing that all tongues should, and must at last give to God the glory of faithfulness; and is thus the ordinary close of our prayers and praises, to finish our acknowledgment of His faithfulness, and engaging of ourselves faithfully to every duty that may honour Him. *John.*

*Veris est. I should think it not strange concerning the Lord's trial of my faith, as though I were a stranger in the land.*

The first part of the Chapter, contains several directions, which lead to a right disposition, and carriage in the Christian's life, and several exhortations to the same. The first direction recommended is, that they should not be ashamed of their sufferings, as men are to be ashamed of their new and strange thing. The second is, That their hands should not be idle, but should be busy, and purge away their iniquities, which ought to be well taken. *John 1.* Christ is our croffe, especially for Christians, and therefore in need of frequent directions, exhortations, and those born-in with much affliction, being thus in hazard to take some finfull course, or to ease, or else to suffer heartily, and in a way unbecoming their Master; and ready also to think themselves forgotten, or slighted by others: for which reason the Church is, that the Apostle, having been upon the point of fainting, and exhorting the faithful, first of all, in the middle, doth here remind of a man, who was by this loving benediction, that is, *John 1.* The Church is the

being not only trials, but fiery trials to prove us, which  
 ing such as do deceive them of the interest in such a  
 comfort, and reaches to that which is dearer to them, as  
 men, their credit, liberty and life. *Mat. 16. 24.* and such  
 as new Professors will abide, *2 Cor. 13. 9.* for, such trials  
 are the Godly here forewarned of, and supposed to be  
 in, while the Apostle thus directs, *1 Thim. 3. 16.* *Think it not strange*  
*concerning the fiery trial.* 3. So unwilling are the Chil-  
 dren of the Lord to forecast fiery trials, and so make them  
 familiar to themselves before they come, *Heb. 12. 5.* so  
 subject to security, even when trials are nearest, *Mat. 26.*  
*40.* so ready to dream of much worldly ease, *Job. 1. 6.*  
 and when they get but a little breathing-time from  
 trouble to promise themselves perpetual exemption there-  
 from, *2 Cor. 3. 6.* that they are in great hazard to be  
 surprized and perplexed at the sight of approaching tri-  
 als, as men use to be at the sight of any thing strange and  
 terrible, which they did not forecast and prepare for: as  
 it imported in this direction, *1 Thim. 3. 16.* *Think it not strange*  
*concerning the fiery trial, as though some strange thing had happened*  
*unto you.* 4. How fiery forever the trials of the Lord's  
 People be, there is no reason why they should seem  
 strange to them, seeing they are so frequently forewarned  
 of them in Scripture, considering that the best of the  
 Saints, and the Captain of our salvation, have gone  
 through as hot, *Heb. 12. 1. 2. 3.* and especially that they  
 are assured of one with them in the hottest furnace of af-  
 fliction they can be put in, who will quench the violence  
 of the fire, that it shall not consume them, *1 Cor. 13. 2. 5.*  
 Therefore they should not think it strange concerning the  
 fiery trial, *as though some strange thing had happened*  
*unto them.* 5. One main end for which the Lord exercises  
 His People with fiery trials, is, That they may have  
 proof of the strength of His grace in them for their own  
 comfort, *1 Cor. 13. 2.* and a discovery of the weakness thereof  
 of sin, and of the much droth of corruption which is  
 in them, for their humiliation and purging, *1 Cor. 13. 2.* for  
 this is the purpose of the fiery trial, *1 Cor. 13. 2.*  
 Godly

Chapter. *Just English translation of the text.* 211  
Gently. That they are only to try them. & The con-  
sideration of those excellent advantages which the latter  
People have by trials, should comfort them against  
offence thereof: for this; that afflictions are but to try  
them; is here held forth as a special reason why they  
should not take unreason with them: *I think not strange  
concerning the fiery trial, which is to try you, although some  
strange thing happened unto you.* cm 280.11 1 ed of 1630

Verk 13. *But rejoice in as much as ye are partakers of Christ's  
sufferings; that when His glory shall be revealed, ye may  
be glad also with exceeding joy.*

The second direction for a right disposition and ex-  
ercise under the cross for Christ, which the Apostle pro-  
pounded positively, is. That they should count it great  
matter of joy to be honoured to suffer for Christ: And  
this, together with the former direction, the Apostle  
beats in by two further arguments. The one is. That  
by their sufferings for Christ, they were made partakers  
to him in his suffering, and did partake of the fruits of  
his sufferings for them. The other is. That their suffer-  
ings for Christ were to them sure pledges, and assur-  
ances of their sharing with him of his glory, at the fu-  
ture appearance. Hence *Leon. 1.* It is not enough for  
the Lords People to have their hearts kept free of all  
courageous under the cross, or amazement at it, as  
strange lot; but they ought also to rejoice in their suf-  
ferings for Christ, as the manner of their great honour and  
happiness: which fruits of spirit may be expected  
to; under the honest trials wherewith the Lords People  
can be exercised: for, after the Apostle hath exhorted  
them not to think it strange concerning the fiery trial, he  
addeth this second direction. *But rejoice, and be patient  
who are honoured to suffer for Christ, as who are partakers  
of his sufferings; in regard they have a  
special measure of that wisdom and strength which was  
purchased by his death, communicated to them.*

their trials, *Rev.* 12. 11. are then brought to a nearer conformity with Him in his estate of humiliation, *Rom.* 8. 19. do undergo what He esteems done to Himself, *Act.* 9. 4. and do fill up their share of these sufferings which divine providence hath carved out for Christ mystical, *Gal.* 1. 24. In all which respects, sufferers may be said to partake of the sufferings of Christ; every one whereof may be to be a strong motive to chearfulness and conformity under sufferings for Him: for, to this end doth the Apostle give this reason, comprehending all these privileges; *In as much as ye are partakers of the sufferings of Christ.* 3. Although Christ's essential glory be alwayes one and the same, *Heb.* 13. 8. Yet His declarative or manifested glory is sometimes much hid and veiled, as it was in a special way during the time of His personal humiliation, *Jeb.* 17. 5. and will be so, in a great measure, till all His suffering-Members share of His glory at the last day, at which time He shall be clearly manifested to be fully glorious; as is imported in this other reason of joy in suffering for Christ, *That when His glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also, &c.* 4. The Lord hath reserved the fulnesse of the joy of His People, till the time of the full manifestation of His own glory at His last appearing, that His own may long much for that day, and may not take it ill to suspend their joy, while His glory is under a vail; for, *when His glory shall be revealed, they shall be glad with exceeding joy.* 5. As Christ's second coming will be a glad day to all that believe in Him, *2 Thess.* 1. 10. So, there is a special measure of joy and gladnesse reserved for them, who get grace to go chearfully through a sad suffering-lot in the world for His sake; in the consideration whereof He doth allow them to comfort themselves against their sufferings, and doth not esteem it a mercenary disposition in them so to do; for, to sufferers is this consolation given, as especially testified in them, *That when His glory shall be revealed, they shall be glad with exceeding joy.*

Verf. 14. *If ye be reproached for the Name of Christ, happy are ye; for the Spirit of glory, and of God resteth upon you: on their part He is evil spoken of, but on your part He is glorified.*

The Apostle addeth to the former three arguments, several others, to encourage them against their sufferings. The fourth is, That even their enduring disgracefull speeches for Christ, should prove a mean and evidence of their happiness; and therefore much more their greater sufferings. The fifth, which explains their happiness, is, That the glorious Spirit of the Lord delighteth to reside in the hearts of sufferers; which must be understood of some special operations of His, seeing He dwelleth, or resteth, in the hearts of all His own, whether they be put to suffering, or not. The sixth is, That the reproaching of the Godly, is taken as done against that glorious Spirit of God residing in them. And the seventh is, That their constant enduring of that, and other degrees of their sufferings, is esteemed much glory to that glorious Spirit. Hence *Learn*, 1. Although even those of the Lords People who do not decline suffering for Him, are very strongly desirous to suffer with credit before men, *Psal. 119. 61.* Yet they ought to expect reproach as a main trial in their trials, whereby their reputation will be raised in the minds of many, and first motions to make them detestable, laid to their charge, as the word here signifies; for, this is supposed to be a part of the trial, which the Apostle here guardeth against. *If ye be reproached, &c. happy are ye.* 2. There are several kinds of trials wherewith the Lords People are exercised, and every one are not tried with the same. So the Lord takes notice of all the degrees and kinds of their trials, were it but an envious look, *1 Sam. 18. 6.* the least disdainful gesture, *Psal. 22. 7.* He will not suffer the lesser sort of their sufferings, to want their own consolation and reward; and particularly

taken notice of all disgraceful expressions against His People, which in the particular trial here spoken of: for, having comforted them against fiery trials, in the former Verse, he here comforteth them against reproach, *If ye be reproached for the Name of Christ, happy are ye.* 2. Even those who are not put to the hottest kind of sufferings, are ready to miscarry, and be discouraged under the lesser, because the best are not easily brought to deny their own strength: till they be under some extremity, *1 Cor. 1. 9.* for, this is imported in the Apostle's guarding and comforting against reproach, *If ye be reproached for the Name of Christ, happy are ye.* 3. The consideration of the greatness of the reward, which the Lord graciously bestoweth upon the least degree of suffering for Him, should make His People joyfully undergo the greatest and most fiery of their trials; If it be a happiness to be reproached for His sake, it must be a great happiness to be killed for his sake: for, the Apostle makes this a reason why they should rejoyce under fiery trials, that to be reproached for Him, was a happy thing; *If ye be reproached for the Name of Christ, happy are ye.* 4. It is not the sufferings of Christians, but the cause for which they do suffer, which makes them happy, to wit, their suffering for the profession of the Name of Christ, for adhering to His Truth, and their duty to Him, and our respect to His glory: for, this is the qualification of a right sufferer, who may count himself happy in his sufferings; *If ye be reproached for the Name of Christ, happy are ye.* 5. The third Person of the blessed Trinity is glorious in Himself, being God equal with the Father and the Son, *1 Job. 5. 7.* and worketh glorious effects in the hearts where He dwelleth, such as the bestowing and increasing of grace, which is begun glory, *1 Cor. 3. 18.* giving clear fore-sights of glory, *Eph. 1. 17.* and sometimes fore-fore-tasts thereof, *Rom. 8. 23.* In which respects He is here called, *The Spirit of glory, and of God.* 6. As the Spirit of the Lord doth constantly abide in the hearts of all Believers, in regard of some of His operations,

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tion: Job. 14. 16. especially in regard of His preserving the seeds and fruits of grace, and keeping the Saints from final apostasy, 1 Job. 3. 4. So, He hath ordinarily a more glorious, and more constant residence, in regard of His comfortable and supporting operations, in the hearts of sufferers, than of others - and though he have pierced Himself to fill the hearts of His suffering people, always with sense and comfort, but may withhold the same from the dearest of them under their sharpest sufferings, and put them to live by Faith, as it was with David, and Christ himself, Psal. 22. 1, 2. &c. Yet sometimes their allowance of comfort is larger, and their enjoyment of sensible presence longer, than what others may, who are not put to suffer, and sweeter than what themselves have had before suffering: for this is here set forth as an encouragement made out in a special way to sufferers, *The Spirit of glory and of God, resteth upon you.* 8. The true happiness of Believers standeth in their enjoyment of the presence of Christ's Spirit, residing in their hearts, and proving Himself to be there by His gracious operations, which may be had in the midst of sharpest sufferings: the consideration whereof ought to make great joy in the hearts of sufferers: for, the Apostle having pronounced such happy, he doth explain their happiness, which is the reason of their joy under their sufferings, *That the Spirit of glory, and of God, resteth upon them.* 9. The more glorious and constant the abode of Christ's Spirit in the hearts of His suffering people appeareth to be, the more enraged will their violent persecutors be to speak evil of that Spirit that dwelleth in them, which they will be esteemed to do (though they do not expressly blaspheme the Spirit) when they fether the operations of the Spirit upon Satan, Mat. 12. 24. 28. or, when they wilfully resist and oppose His known mind delivered to them, by His suffering people, Mat. 23. 31. for, though the Spirit of glory, and of God rest upon these persecuted Saints, Yet, upon the part of their persecutors *He will speak of.* 10. It may allay



the Godly, the bitterness of reproaches, and disgraceful  
expressions against them, to consider that by those the  
Spirit of the Lord counteth Himself evil spoken of, and  
abused, as done directly against Himself, those wrongs  
which are done to His People, who are His Temple, and  
His workmanship, and will punish wicked men ac-  
cordingly: for, this may be taken as a particular encour-  
agement against reproach, that even the Spirit of God  
was, upon the part of them that did reproach His Fel-  
lowers, *evil spoken of.* 18. The Lord doth esteem Him-  
self much glorified by His Peoples constancy in suffer-  
ing for Him, while His terror, sweetness, power, and  
other properties are proclaimed and commended by that  
practice of His People, in choosing of affliction rather  
than sin against Him; and His esteeming so of it, should  
be a strong motive to chearfulness and constancy in suf-  
fering for Him: for, this the Apostle expressly asserteth,  
as an argument to constancy and chearfulness under  
suffering, *On your part He is glorified.*

*Act. 15. But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a  
thief, or as an evil doer, or as a busy-body in other mens  
matters.*

Here is a third direction for attaining to a right ear-  
riage in a time of persecution; the sum whereof is, That  
as they desire to find the sweetness of the former conso-  
lations which the Apostle had held forth to sufferers, they  
would keep themselves free of those evils, which even  
Heathen Magistrates, under whose power they lived,  
would readily punish; such as, wronging the persons, or  
estates of their neighbours, meddling with things without  
the bounds of their calling, and other wickednesses of  
that sort, So should they be the lesse moved with their  
sufferings. Hence *Learn, 1.* It is the duty of those who  
have power and authority over others, to prove them-  
selves keepers of both the Tables of the Law of God, by  
punishing without respect of persons, not only the greater

sorts of unrighteousness, such as murder, and theft, which by men injure the persons or estates of their neighbours; but also those more subtil and specious sins, such as invading the rights of others, going beyond the bounds of folks calling, which often are veiled with the pretences of zeal for God, and the publick good, *Numb. 16. 32* which kind of sins the Apostle understands here, by being busie in other mens matters; Yea, all other known iniquities, whether against the first Table, such as idolatry, *Job 31. 26, 27, 28.* blasphemie, *Lev. 24. 11.* Sabbath-breaking, *Numb. 15. 32.* Or against the second, such as disobedience to parents, *Deut. 21. 18,* &c. adultery, *Job 31. 11.* All which, and the like, are iniquities to be punished by the Judge, and are comprehended here under this general clause, *evil doers*: for, the Apostle supposeth here, that even Christians, being found guilty of any of those iniquities, ought to be put to suffer for them, while he giveth them this caution, *But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evil doer, or as a busy-body in other mens matters.* 2. Even nature's light will speak against the toleration of several sorts of evils; and will not suffer men that have power, and have not put out that light, by frequent sinning against it, to passe them without punishment; What a shame then is it for those within the Church to commit such things, or tolerate them in others? For, the Apostle supposeth here, that Christians who lived under Heathen Magistrates, would certainly be put to suffer by them, if they were found murderers, thieves, evil-doers, or busy-bodies in other mens matters. 3. As it is the duty of every one who by their miscarriage have deserved the stroke of humane justice, willingly to submit to the same, *Luke 23. 41.* So it should be the great care of the Lord's people to cleave those sins which may draw them under that stroke, & being a great reproach to Christianity, when the professors of it are found guilty of those things, which even Heathens, or such as are no better, cannot but punish, and a great hardening of wicked men in their evil ways: for, thus

and the like trifles, the Apostle giveth this third direction. *But let none of you suffer as a murderer, &c.* Here we see Christians employ Christ's Spirit to apply that vertue which He hath purchased by His death, for the changing of their nature, and mortifying of the love of sin in their hearts, and study watchfulness in their carriage, they will readily break out in those abominations, for which even Heathens would justly put them to suffer: for, this direction of the Apostle's, doth import, that except Christians did watch and pray, and make use of Christ's death for mortification of sin within, to which duties he had stirred them up before they were in hazard to break out in the sins here mentioned, and so be put to suffer as murderers, thieves, evil-doers, and busy-bodies in other men's matters.

**Verf. 16.** *Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God on this behalf.*

The Apostle giveth some further directions for attaining the fore-mentioned end. The fourth in number, is implied in the beginning of this Verse, That they should cleave to the profession of the Name and Truth of Christ, entering themselves under their sufferings, as His anointed ones; upon which he inferreth the fifth. That if they did so suffer, they ought not to be ashamed of their sufferings: But on the contrary, (which is a sixth direction) they should take occasion from such sufferings, of giving much glory to God, for honouring and enabling them to so suffer. Hence *Learn*, 1. They that would have true comfort under their sufferings for Christ, must first study to be real Christians, taught of Christ to know Him, and His will, *Act. 17. 26.* to have from Him the anointing of His Spirit, *2 Joh. 2. 20.* whereby they are made in some measure to resemble Him in His nature and dispositions, *1 Cor. 3. 18.* *2 Pet. 1. 4.* and in His Office, to which He is anointed, by having power over their souls; and in His strength, overcoming all opposition to the

the way of their duty. 1. *John. 5. 4. anointed Kings*  
 God, by offering up themselves in a sacrifice to God.  
*Rom. 15. 1.* and their service through Jesus Christ. 1. *Cor.*  
*9. 5.* as a spiritual Priesthood; by communicating the  
 knowledge of Christ to others, especially those under  
 their charge; *Gen. 28. 10.* whereby they do resemble  
 Him in the exercise of his Prophetical Office; and espe-  
 cially to be conform to Him, in suffering for Him, and  
 shewing forth that meekness and constancy, and other  
 of His communicable perfections, which shined in Him  
 under his sufferings, avowing his Name, and Office, so  
 which He is appointed upon all hazards: for this is to *suf-*  
*fer as a Christian* (whose name is an anointed one) which  
 the Apostle here implies as necessary for all that would  
 taste the sweetness of the former consolations; But if any  
 man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed. 2. Profane  
 Christians who may be justly put to suffer for their  
 faults, are very ready to entitle themselves to the honour  
 of suffering for Christ; and therefore, it commands  
 Christ's Ministers to clear the cause of suffering, in which  
 Christians may comfort themselves, and the right man-  
 ner of suffering for a right cause: for the Apostle in this,  
 and the preceding Verse, leaveth a guard about the for-  
 mer consolations given to sufferers for Christ, lest they  
 might be usurped by profane professors, justly put to  
 suffer for their miscarriage; *Let none of you suffer as*  
*murderers, or.* but if any man suffer as a Christian, let him  
 not be ashamed. 3. There is no shame or contempt that  
 the world can pour upon sufferers for Christ, whereas  
 they ought to be ashamed, but rather to despise shame  
 for Him, as He did for us, *Heb. 12. 2.* as they would  
 have Him dealing with them as if He were ashamed of  
 them another day. *Mark 8. 38.* for, this is the first di-  
 version; *If any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be*  
*ashamed.* 4. When the Lord by His providence brings  
 a necessity upon Christians of suffering for Him, and His  
 Truth, and by His grace enable them to carry it  
 bravely christianly under the same, they are much more

the duty of them that place their trust in God, especially considering, that the great wrath was against their falling in those sins, which might have brought them to no less suffering, and with out that grace and comfort, than now, while they are yet to suffer for Christ, and their duty to Him: for, this is the Right direction, *Let him glorify God on this behalf; so will that he is put to suffer not as a sinner, or a murderer, but as a Christian.*

*Ver. 17. For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the Gospel of God?*

There are two further arguments to move the Godly to courage and constancy under their sufferings; the one is, That now Gods appointment and fit opportunity was come, wherein he would have his just displeasure against the rest of men, beginning first to lyen in his own family, the Church under the New Testament, by trouble and persecution, for the correction and trial of his own; therefore they had no reason to faint under these trials, since the time of them was of Gods appointment, and that the Godly were only to endure the beginning of that which would make an end of their persecutors. The other argument is, That since Gods just displeasure against his own first manifested toward his own People, instead of their wicked enemies, behoved to be unspeakably terrible, and therefore they had no reason to fear suffering from them, nor to joy with them in their evil dayes to shew the same. Hence *Learn*, 1. Trouble and persecution cannot arise in the Church when wicked men have so much power, policy and malice never to great, when that fit and prepared opportunity (as the word is expressed) is come, which hath been expressed in the eternal counsel of God, who first intended how long and how many troubles of the Church should

and so what period of time they shall  
end. *Job. 10. 15.* The consideration whereof should  
quiet and comfort the hearts of the Godly under their  
sufferings. But it is here set forth as a ground of comfort  
full submission, or a suffering for, that the Lord is present  
and himself for that suffereth (as the word signifieth) a  
cruel. 2. The Church is the House of God, whereof  
himself is both the Builder, *Psal. 147. 2.* and the Foun-  
dation and chief corner-stone, *1/a. 18. 16.* wherein he  
delighteth to dwell, *Psal. 132. 14.* and which he will  
therefore protect and defend, *Zeph. 2. 5.* wherein  
should be every thing belonging to the glory of God, *1/a.*  
*17. 1 Tim. 3. 15.* especially the persons of the Saints  
thereof, *Psal. 93. 5.* for, for the sake of the Church,  
The House of God. 3. As the Lord is pleased sometimes  
to begin his judgments at the sins of such within the  
Church, that thereby his own may take warning, *2/a.*  
*3/6/7.* So he seeth it fitting at some other times to use  
another method, and to begin at his own Church, be-  
fore corrections, while his enemies (who are the  
drops of that cup, whereof his own must bear a part, *1/a.*  
*7/2. Jer. 25. 29. and 17. 18.*) are spared, that he  
make use of them as a rod wherewith to smite his  
Children, *Isa. 10. 5. 12.* that he may prove himself  
partially just in correcting the sin of his own Church,  
and oftentimes more dishonourable to him than  
of others, *Amos 3. 2.* For which, and the like cause,  
that judgments must begin at the House of God. 4. It should  
there be no vindictive wrath in any of the righteous  
sufferings of the Godly, since Christ hath borne  
the full, *Rom. 5. 9.* and so all his saints must be patient  
and consequently even persecution itself, *1/a.*  
and cross, *Psal. 25. 10.* Yet those calamities which  
the Lord visiteth his Church, are not  
punishments, not only because they are patient  
and meek, and therefore, with whom God  
dwelleth, *1/a.*  
are not  
punishments, but because they are patient

essential trial to the Godly, will be turned in a judgement to their persecutors; as the Apostle imputeth in the latter part of this Verse, but also because even persecutors themselves suffering for Christ and his Truth, in answer to the Godly, as they are alwayes acts of the Lord's love to them. *Heb. 12. 6.* So they may be also acts of his holy justice, correcting and humbling them for their injuries which he hath pardoned. *Psal. 92. 8.* So that those same sufferings which the Godly endure for Christ and his Truth, may be to them also fatherly chastisement for their faults, which in Scripture are called judgements, even upon the Godly, *Psal. 119. 75.* for here the Apostle speaking of the trials and sufferings of the Godly, saith, *Judgment must begin at the House of God.* 5. The trials and hard exercises of the Church, are certain forerunners of a wofull end, abiding the instruments thereof, when the Lord hath done his work by them; the consideration whereof should keep the Lord's People from fainting under their sufferings from wicked men, and from being drawn to join with them in their evil ways for present ease; for if judgement first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the Gospel? 6. At the end of all wicked men, even of those who have not heard the Gospel, shall be everlasting destruction, because they have not made use of those natural impressions of God, and his Will, that are left in them, *Psal. 9. 17.* So the judgement abiding those who have heard the Gospel, and would not suffer themselves to be persuaded to imbrace the blessed offers made therein, nor give up themselves to Christ's obedience, (which is the description the Apostle giveth of those whom he here threatneth, supposing them to have been hearers of the Gospel,) shall be terrible, as no word can express. Therefore the Apostle asketh this question; which none can answer, *What shall the end be of them that obey not the Gospel?*

And thus the Apostle hath shewed, that the trials and sufferings of the Godly, are necessary for their perfection, and that they shall be rewarded for their sufferings.

Verf. 18. *And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?*

Here the Apostle cleareth his former argument to this purpose, That if even justified persons, and holy walkers had such a hard lot in the world, that they could not but with great difficulty, and through many fiery trials win to the Kingdom of Heaven, Those who did cast off all Religion, and gave themselves up to all wickedness, might expect in the day of Wrath, conforming with them, to find no place to shelter themselves from his everlasting wrath; and therefore there was no reason why the Godly should fear them, or joyn with them in their evil wayes, to shun sufferings from them, seeing their end should be so terrible. Hence *Learn*, 1. Although the Salvation of all that flie to Christ, and take themselves to the study of holinesse, be most sure, in regard of Christs undertaking to cause them persevere till they come in. *Job*. 10. 28. and the way to that salvation be in itself sweet, *Prov*. 3. 17. and in regard of Christs large allowance of strength and comfort, easie to the renewed man, *Mat*. 11. 30. Yet, considering the many fiery trials there are in the way, and the Believers own weaknesse, it is no easie matter for them to win through to the possession thereof; The consideration of which difficulty should be so far from discouraging them in the way, that it should provoke them to put on much resolution, to hold on that way in Christs strength, notwithstanding all difficulties: for, not the possibility of the Elects final Salvation, but the difficulty of attaining it, by reason of many trials, and their own weaknesse, is imported in this expression, as a motive to constancy, *If the righteous scarcely be saved, &c.* 2. While the Lords People are full of sin, and wicked persons prospering, they should be frequently to consider how wofull, and how terrible the end of these wicked endeavours will be, when they shall be forced to appear before God.

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Judge, and shall find no place to shelter them from his fiercer wrath, which shall pursue them to Hell, and torment them there for ever; that by such thoughts the suffering-Children of God, may be moved neither to envie them for their present prosperity, nor incline to joyn with them in their sinful courses, for eschewing trouble from them. *Psal.* 37. 1, 2, &c. and 73. 2, 17. But rather to endure sufferings from them, that they may not share with them in their wofull end: for, that the Godly might not run with their prospering persecutors to the same excesse of riot, nor faint under sufferings from them. The Apostle doth again represent to their hearts the consideration of their unspeakably terrible end, by this other question, *Where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?* 3. The consideration of this difficulty in the way of the Godly's salvation, is sufficient to convince us, that their end must be unspeakably terrible, who are so far from taking pains to be saved, that they shake off all duties of Religion, as the word, *ungodly*, signifies; and give themselves up to all wickedness, as the word, *sinner*, doth import, and so hast their own destruction: for, so much is imported in the connexion of the first part of this Verse, with the latter; *If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?*

*Vers. 19. Wherefore, let them that suffer according to the will of God, commit the keeping of their souls to Him in well doing as unto a faithful Creator.*

Let the sharpnesse of the trials, wherewith the Apostle gave fore-warning in the former words, and the difficulty of attaining salvation by reason thereof, might encourage the hearts of the Godly; The Apostle gives here the seventh and last direction, which is, That they should give up their souls to the keeping of their Heavenly Father, in the midst of their sufferings, and so hold on in their way, notwithstanding of sufferings; and this direction the Apostle supporteth in by two arguments; the first is, *Wherefore,*

whatever they did suffer, was carved out to them: not by the lust of men, but by the good-will of their God. The other is, That under their sufferings for well-doing, they might be at quietnesse concerning the eternal salvation of their souls, and their through-bearing till they come to the possession thereof, having put them in his hand, who is both able to save them, having made them, and all things, of nothing; and in testimony of his good-will to save them, hath engaged his faithfulness in his Promises for that end: and therefore Believers had no reason but to go on chearfully and constantly in their duty, notwithstanding of all their sufferings. Hence Learn,

1. The consideration of the difficulty that is in the way of the salvation of the Lord's People, by reason of the many fiery trials they have to go through, should stir them up to make sure work about their souls, by putting them in Christs hand, so shall they have courage and strength under their sufferings: for, this last direction is inferred upon the former purpose, as the first word maketh clear, *Wherefore, let them that suffer, &c. commit the keeping of their souls to Him.* 2. The Lord's People should more highly esteem of, and be more sollicitous about, a preservation of their souls, especially in a troublesome time, than of all things else in the world; it being a special part of heavenly wisdom and prudence, to know that by faith, putting it in Christs hand, so will they be sure of quietnesse of spirit under all their sufferings, *Phil. 31. 5.* and will value the lesse, other losses, than his soul, so wel being in safety, *2 Tim. 1. 12.* for, the Spirit of God doth not mind them of taking course to preserve other things, knowing they were ready to spend too much of their care that way in an evil time, but giveth this direction for quickning their hearts, however other things were. *Commit the keeping of your souls to Him.* 3. They that have committed the keeping of their souls to Jesus Christ, as they would have comfort under their sufferings, must hold on in the way of well-doing; remembering that however their souls that are committed to Him,

cannot be lost, yet their assurance and comfort cannot be kept but in that way: therefore the Apostle qualifyeth this direction, *Commit the keeping of your souls to Him in well doing.* 4. They who from the sense of their souls hazard to perish, for any ability themselves have to preserve them, and from their desire to have their soul preserved above all other things, do by faith, put them in the hand of a Saviour for mercy and salvation; and having so done, do betake themselves, in his strength, to the way of their duty, whatever they may suffer in it, they need not doubt of Christ's taking the charge and custody of the soul thus committed to him: for, that they may be confident he will take the charge of them, and safely keep what is committed to him, he thus by his Spirit, speaking through the Apostle, commandeth, *Commit the keeping of your souls to Him.* 5. The sufferings of the Lord's People come not according to the lust and will of their adversaries, but are measured out, and ordered by the will of the Lord, which is alwayes a good will towards his own, making all things work for their good, *Rom. 8. 28.* The consideration whereof should hearten them under all their sufferings: for, this is here asserted as an argument to constancy and chearfulnesse under their sufferings, that they did suffer *according to the will of God.* 6. They that would have courage under their sufferings from powerful adversaries, must by faith lay hold upon God's Omnipotency, manifested in the works of Creation; The consideration whereof cannot but give strength and courage to Believers under their sufferings, they having the Lord, and all his Properties engaged to be forthcoming for them in the Covenant of Grace; and especially, considering that their through-bearing and deliverance cannot but be easie to Him, who made all of nothing: for, that the Apostle may encourage sufferers, he representeth the Lord to their faith, under the consideration of a Creator. 7. The consideration of the Lord's faithfulness in keeping of his Promises, is a strong pillar of the Saints confidence, that they shall be

born through all their trials, seeing his good will hath moved him expressly to payn his faithfullnesse for every thing they need; particularly, for pardoning their sinnes upon their confession, 1 *Job*. 1. 9. for enabling them to the duties of holinesse, 1 *Thess.* 3. 24. and for bearing them through all their sufferings, 1 *Cor.* 10. 13. 1 *Thess.* 3. 2. 3. for, this consideration of the Lord, joynt with that of his Omnipotency, is here held forth to the comfort of sufferers, as a strong ground of their confidence, about the safety of their souls, and their being well born through all their trials; *He is a faithfull Creator.*

## CHAP. V.

**T**His Chapter hath three parts. In the first, the Apostle (having insinuate himself upon the Officers of the Church, *ver.* 1.) perswadeth them to the prime duties of their Calling, and dissuadeth them from the main evils incident to them, *ver.* 2, 3. by the consideration of the glorious reward abiding Christ's faithfull Servants, *ver.* 4.

In the second part, he presseth the duties of the flock, that they should be subject to their Officers, and one of them to another; that they should study humility, which he urgeth by severall arguments, *ver.* 5, 6. that they should trust God with their thorow-bearing in these duties, *ver.* 7. and prepare themselves for the battel against Satan, their cruel and restless adversary, *ver.* 8. by faith opposing all his temptations, notwithstanding of afflictions in that way, considering that all the rest of the Saints were their fellow-souldiers in this warfare, *ver.* 9.

The third part, containeth the close of the whole Epistle, wherein the Apostle prayeth for their perseverance and perfection, *ver.* 10. praiseth in commendation, *ver.* 11. commendeth the bearer of the Epistle, and the Epistle itself, *ver.* 12. delivereth commendation

to them from other Saints, *Ver. 13.* exhorteth them to  
mutual expressions of love; and wisheth unto them all  
true happiness, *Ver. 14.*

*Ver. 1.* The Elders which are among you I exhort, who are  
also an Elder, and a witnesse of the sufferings of Christ,  
and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed.

**T**HE Apostle, being to ~~perform~~ the duty of the Church-  
Officers, he doth in the first place insinuate himself  
upon them, by drawing several reasons from his own  
person, to make his following exhortations have the  
more weight with them; The first is, That he who was  
so earnest with them, had the same Office with them, to  
the duties whereof he did excite them. The second is, That  
he had been an eye-witnesse of Christ's sufferings for the  
Church; which did oblige him, and all Christs Servants,  
to faithfulness. The third is, That he did by faith share  
with them, and other Believers, of the right unto, and  
full fruition of that blessednesse which Christ had pur-  
chased, and will in due time manifest to his Redeemed  
Ones: All which considerations might move them to  
take an up-stirring message well off his hand. Hence  
*Lev. 1.* Even in the midst of persecution, and while  
the Lord's People are in exile, and under the power of  
enemies to the Truth, the Lord can keep up a standing  
Ministry, and his Ordinances among them, in despite  
of Satan and all his instruments: for, the Apostle, writ-  
ting to the dispersed, and persecuted Christian Jews, sup-  
poseth them to have Officers, and those Officers to have  
opportunity of going about their duty, while he thus  
exhorts them to it, *The Elders which are among you I ex-  
hort, &c.* 2. Even those whose calling it is, to stir  
others to their duty, and in whom there is no such re-  
markable defect in the discharge of their duty, as  
warranteth any publick notice to be taken of it, have neverthe-  
less a great need to be very earnestly stirred up to  
greater diligence and progress in their duty, that

may have already mentioned, there being in the best, even  
 of Christ's Ministers, a strong party drawing them back  
 from their duty, *Mat. 26. 41.* and at their best, much  
 from coming in what they might attain unto, *Psal. 7.*  
*12, 13.* For, here the Spirit of the Lord, whose love mak-  
 eth him publish the faults of his dearest Servants, when  
 it is necessary, *Rev. 2. 4.* Although he see it not meet  
 before the Church in this Epistle, to reprove the Officers  
 for any failing, Yet doth he by his Apostle very earnestly  
 stir them up to their duty: *The Elders which are among*  
*you Exhort, &c.* 3. The duties of Ministers, and other  
 Office-bearers of the Church, ought to be pressed upon  
 them in the hearing of the People, that so those Officers  
 may be the more engaged to their duty, and the People  
 the more able to discern betwixt those of them that are  
 conscionable in the discharge of their duty, and others  
 that are not; Therefore the Apostle doth not satisfy  
 himself to write to the Church-Officers concerning their  
 duty in any private Letter, directed to themselves alone,  
 but doth insist upon their duty in this publick Letter, di-  
 rected to the whole Church; and while he beginneth to  
 deal with the Officers, he directeth his speech to the  
 People, *The Elders which are among you Exhort, &c.*  
 4. Those that bear Office in the House of God, ought to  
 be such as are come to some maturity of age, and have  
 as are of some considerable standing in the profession of  
 Christianity, See *1 Tim. 3. 6.* and especially such, as by  
 their wisdom, experience, and gravity may deserve that  
 reverence and respect which is suitable for the aged; for,  
 this stile of *Presbyters* or *Elders*, here given to the Officers  
 of the Church, may be safely conceived both to point  
 at their age, and their qualifications suitable to the aged.  
*The Elders that are among you.* 5. Christ's Ministers have  
 not only the charge of his Flock, but also of their Fel-  
 low-labourers with whom they have society or corres-  
 pondence in the Work of the Lord, and so are bound to  
 stir up and encourage one another in their duty; for the  
 Apostle doth not only presse the duty of the People,

also of their Church-officers; and while he doth so represents himself as a Fellow-presbyter, or Colleague with other ordinary Ministers; *The Elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an Elder.* 6. No Minister of Jesus Christ ought to affect or usurp any superiority over other Ministers, considering how much Christ was displeased with it in his own Disciples, *Mat. 20. 25, 26.* And that this great Apostle, from whom the Antichristian Church pretendeth her warrant for Prelacy among Ministers, while he speaketh to other Church-officers, holdeth forth himself only as their equall, *Who am also an Elder.* 7. As the Ministers of Christ ought to take well with exhortation to their duty, even from the people under their charge, who, though they have no jurisdiction over their Officers, to call them to a judicial accompt, or inflict censures upon them for their faults, which doth belong to their Fellow-presbyters, *1 Cor. 14. 32.* Yet they have good warrant to warn them of their duty, and incite them to it, with due reverence and modesty suitable to their station, *Col. 4. 17.* So should they receive counsel and warning, especially from their Fellow-labourers, who ought to have more courage and skill than ordinarily the people have, to point out the duty of Church-officers, and ought to be looked upon by other Officers who hear them point out their duty, as having a calling from God through vertue of their Office so to do: for, the Apostle speaking to the Officers of the Church, makes this an argument to prevail with them, that he who brought this message, was *also an Elder.* 8. It is no easie thing for one of Christ's Ministers to prevail with others of that same sacred Calling, by counsel and exhortation, every one of them being apt to lift up themselves above another, *Luke 22.* and at the apprehension of that frame of spirit in their Fellow-labourers, to have their passions stirred against them, *Mat. 20. 24.* The consideration whereof should move every Minister to much humility and loving-kindnesse in dealing with their Fellow-labourers.

the Apostle doth here use many insinuations upon the Church-guides, as arguments to bear in his following exhortations upon them, thereby importing some difficulty of prevailing with them, and is very humbly earnest with them, thereby casting a copie to one Minister how to deal with another, as is imported in the signification of these words, *The Elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an Elder.* 9. It pleased our Redeemer to suffer before witnesses, both in his agony in the Garden, *Mat. 26. 37.* and upon the Crosse, *Mat. 27. 39.* and likewise to imploy some of these Witnesses to preach Him crucified to the Church, thereby condescending to beget the greater certainty in the hearts of Believers, that God's justice is satisfied for them, *Act. 5. 30, 31.* to give us the more lively description of his sufferings, *Act. 3. 15.* and to let us know that he hath borne shame for us, as a part of the punishment due to our sins, *Heb. 12. 2.* for which, and the like causes, the Apostle calleth himself here, *A Witness of the sufferings of Christ.* 10. However these whom the Lord makes most instrumental to gain others to himself, may expect a special reward from him, *Dan. 12. 3.* Yet everlasting blessednesse, or glory, is not a thing proper to them alone, but is the common portion of all faithful Ministers, and Believers in Jesus Christ; for, the Apostle only calleth himself *a partaker*, (or as the word signifieth, a sharer together with others, to wit the flock of Christ, to whom his speech is directed, and their Officers, whose duty he presseth) *of the glory that shall be revealed.* 11. Although the Saints, in this mortal state, could not well endure the least glimpse of glory, much lesse partake of it, as they shall do afterward, *Mark 9. 6.* Yet even while they are in the midst of much outward misery, and in the expectation of more, they have a right, and may attain unto some real participation of glory, while they are by faith united with Christ the Lord of glory, *Col. 1. 27.* and do sometimes tast of the first fruits of that whereupon glorified spirits do live, *1 Cor. 2. 17.* For the Apostle, a persecuted man, and looking for martyrdom.



*Verf. 1. 14. calleth himself a partner (or sharer with other Believers) of the glory that shall be revealed. 13. Although Christ's Ministers should detest the seeking of their own glory before the world, as they desire to resemble their Master, Job. 8. 50. and the best of his Servants, 1 Theff. 2. 6. Yet may they humbly accept any special honour that Christ hath put upon them, when it is manifest that their so doing may tend to his glory, and the advantage of the message they carry: for, that the Apostle may make way for the receiving of the message which he hath to the Church-guides, he doth commend himself from the honour Christ had put upon him, to be a personal witness of his sufferings, and a partaker of the glory to be revealed. 13. The greater certainty of the Truth, and comfort by it, appear to be in them that delivers it, and the more charity they may expresse concerning the good estate of those to whom they do deliver it, the better acceptance, and successe of their message, may they expect: for, the Apostle, that his message might be the better taken, representeth himself as one to whom the truth of the Gospel was most certain, he being a witness of the sufferings of Christ, as one that had much courage and comfort in adhering to it, and much charity toward those with whom he dealt, as being a co-partner with them of the glory to be revealed.*

*Verf. 2. Feed the Flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly: not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind.*

*3. Neither as being lords over Gods heritage: but bringing examples to the flock,*

The Apostle, having insinuated himself in the former Verse, upon the Officers of the Church, that so his counsel here might have the better acceptance with them, he doth in the next place branch out particularly their duty, exhorting them to feed the Lord's People with his Truth, and rule them by his Discipline; both which are in the

signi-

signification of the first word : and that these might be  
the better done, he pressed them to take diligent inspection  
of the manners and several conditions of the people :  
in which duties he beareth in by an argument taken from  
the relation that the People of their charge had to the  
Lord, as being his Flock ; and withall, pointeth out the  
right manner of going about these duties, in six several  
directions ; one whereof is still negative, dissuading from  
some evil, incident to men of that calling ; and another  
positive, perswading to the study of some necessary qua-  
lification requisite in such, to wit, first, That they should  
not go about their duty, as if they were forced unto it ;  
But secondly, from an inward inclination to serve their  
Master, and profit his People.. Thirdly, not from so base  
an end as their outward gain ; But fourthly, from a heart  
fitted by Jesus-Christ for their duty. Fifthly, that they  
should not affect any dominion over the Lord's People ;  
But sixthly, in their whole carriage cast them a copie of  
holy and humble walking. Hence *Learn, 1.* Every  
Minister of Christ ought both to be able to feed his Peo-  
ple with his saving Truth, *Jer. 3. 15.* rightly divided  
and applied. *2 Tim. 2. 15.* to every one of them, accor-  
ding to their several conditions, *Mat. 24. 45.* which is no  
lesse necessary for cherishing and encreasing their spi-  
ritual life, than their ordinary food in season is for their  
bodies, *Job 23. 12.* And likewise they ought to have  
wisdom authority and equity, for ruling of the Lord's  
People by the right exercise of discipline, and applica-  
tion of censures : for, both feeding, and ruling is exprest  
by one word in both the original languages, to signifie  
that they are joyntly requisite in every Minister : whose  
duty here is mainly held forth, *Feed the Flock, 1 Pet.*  
*2.* It is not enough for the Ministers of Christ to hold  
forth sound and saving Truths to his People, in their  
doctrine, and to rule them by the application of censures  
and discipline ; unless they also take diligent inspection  
of their manners, and of their several conditions and ne-  
cessities, by frequent conversing with, and visiting of  
them.

them, as this other word, holding forth their duty, signifieth, without which they can neither apply the Truth, nor censures to the People as they ought? for, this is the second principal part of Church-officers duty, especially Ministers, toward the Flock of God, *taking the oversight thereof.* 3. It should provoke Ministers to fidelity and diligence in their Calling, to consider that the People of their Charge, are the Flock of God, who therefore will provide for them, *Iſa. 40. 11.* and will be very terrible to them that have the charge of them, in case they slight or wrong them, *Ezek. 34. 2, 10. &c.* for, to move the Church-officers to faithfulness and painfulness in their duty, the Apostle thus designeth the People of their charge, *The Flock of God.* 4. Although none that are sensible of their own weakness, and the weight of the charge of souls, will be very forward to thrust themselves into that employment, *Exod. 3. 11. 7er. 1. 6.* Yet, being once called to it, and engaged therein, they should not go about the duties thereof, as being constrained thereunto by their fears, lest they discover their own weakness, or lest they fall under the censure of others, or lest their own conscience may vex them for neglect of their duty: for, this is the first evil from which the Apostle dissuadeth Christ's Ministers, as that which would mar the right manner of going about their duty, *Not by constraints.* 5. There should be in the heart of every faithful Minister, so much love to Jesus Christ, arising from the sense of his personal obligation to him, *2 Cor. 5. 14.* and so great a desire of the salvation of souls, *1 Cor. 10. 33.* as may beget in him such a strong inclination, and inward bent of spirit to his duty, that though there were no external consideration of gain, glory, or the like, to hold him on, Yet may he not be suffered to neglect it: for, this is the first positive qualification of a Minister going rightly about his duty, *But with liberty.* 6. Although Christ's Ministers may with his allowance challenge from the People under their charge, a competent means of outward subsistence, according to their ability,

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ability, *1 Cor. 9. 14.* Yet for any of the Ministers of Christ to make their worldly gain their great inducement to undertake that Calling, or their prime encouragement in going about the Duties of it, is a filthy frame of spirit, which appears to be in them when they stretch themselves to the utmost to please them most, from whom they expect most gain, *Numb. 23. 1.* and to oppose and discourage others, from whom they expect least. *Mic. 3. 5.* for, from this evil, as abominable to God, detestable to faithful Ministers, and a thing that indisposeth them for the right discharge of their duty, the Apostle here doth dissuade in the third direction, *Not for filthy lucre.* 7. A Minister of Christ that would go rightly about his duty, must ly in wait for every opportunity thereof, keeping himself in some fitnessse of disposition, for every part of his Calling, whether the opportunity of discharging the particular duties thereof do presently offer or not, as is imported in the fourth direction, which is positive; *But of a ready mind.* 8. It is an evil to be abhorred by all that would expect the reward of faithful Ministers, to affect or usurp any lordship or dominion, whether over their Fellow-labourers, which appeareth in their seeking preference over them, *3 Job. 9.* or over the People of their charge; which appeareth, by their taking a way with people rather to compel them to subjection to the Gospel, than to perswade them to it, contrary to the Apostles practice, *1 Cor. 4. 21. 2 Cor. 12. 20.* by their making use of the Word, or Discipline, to vent their own private revenge, or to carry their point by meer violence, and outwearying of those that oppose them, *Ezek. 34. 4.* contrary to the Apostles precept, *2 Tim. 2. 24. 25.* for, this is the third evil the Apostle dissuadeth from, in his fifth direction, *Neither as being lords over Gods heritage.* 9. The Church and People of God are his inheritance, which he hath purchased to himself with his blood, *Act. 20. 28.* in which, he is the only Lawgiver, *Isa. 43. 22.* and therefore will never cast off or alienate the same, *Psal. 94. 14.* The consideration whereof should

make all afraid to lend it over his People; or to appropriate this stile to themselves, which is here given to all the Lord's People, as a motive to their Overleers to diligence, and a dissuasive from usurping dominion over them; *Neither as being lords over God's heritage.* 10. That which doth much compleat the Ministers of Jesus Christ, is, when with their abilities to teach, and rule, and other inward qualifications, they have also such an external conversation, as may be alluring to the Flock to follow, and worthy of their imitation, while they expresse in their practice, the graces of God to be in their heart, such as faith and love, *1 Tim. 4. 12.* patience under personal injuries, *1 Cor. 4. 16.* humilicy, and self-denial for the good of others, *1 Cor. 10. 33.* and *11. 1.* for, this is the Apostle's last direction, without which all the rest (suppose they could be where this is wanting) would do little good, *But being ensamples to the Flock.*

*Verf. 4. And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.*

The Apostle, having cleared the duty of the Officers of the Church, he giveth them here in the close of the first part of the Chapter, some strong motives to fidelity and diligence therein; As first, That there was a higher Shepherd than they, to wit, Jesus Christ the Prince of Pastors, to take an account of them. Secondly, That if they were found faithfull and diligent in their duty, they might be sure of an eminent degree of glory from Christ at his second coming. Thirdly, That that glorious reward should remain alwayes the same in it self, and be eternally possesse by them. Hence *Learn, 1.* The most eminent of Christ's Servants have no lesse need of encouragement in their duty, than the meanest under the charge; their trials and temptations being often greater than others, *Luke 22. 31.* and they no lesse subject to discouragement, by reason of these than others, *Cor. 7. 38.* Therefore the Spirit of the Lord findeth it necessary here

to give them encouragement, as he did to the Flock before, *Chap. 4. 13, 14.* And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown. 2. Jesus Christ is the chief Shepherd, the Prince of Pastors, the prime Feeder and Ruler (as the word signifies) of his own Flock, from whom all the Under-shepherds, the Officers of his House, have their Commission, *Mat. 28. 18, 19.* their furniture or gifts, *Eph. 4. 8, 11.* and to whom they must all give an account. *Heb. 13. 17.* who taketh the prime charge of his own Flock, *Isa. 40. 11.* and will supply to them the defects of the Shepherds under Him, *Ezek. 34. 11.* In all which respects he is here called the chief Shepherd. 3. Albeit the Lord useth to give in hand unto his faithfull Servants worth all their pains in his service, either by letting them see some successe of their labours, *2 Cor. 2. 14.* or by giving them inward peace from the faith of his approbation, when desired successe is wanting, *Isa. 49. --4.* Yet he would have them taking their prime encouragement, from what they shall get when he and they meet: for, to the consideration of this the Apostle here leadeth all the Servants of Christ; When the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory. 4. The reward abiding Christ's faithfull Ministers, wherein all the lovers of Christ shall share in their own measure, *2 Tim. 4. --8.* shall be exceeding complete and glorious, as the metaphor of a Crown of glory signifieth, and such as shall never fade or wax old, but unto all eternity shall remain still in its primitive vigour, as if a flower should still keep its fairest lustre, and sweetest smell; which metaphor, is also in the words, and this may comfort them against the fading of their reputation among men, which is incident to the best, *Job. 5. --35. Gal. 4. 16.* for, this is here given to the Church-guides, as their great encouragement, that they are to receive a crown of glory, which shall not away.

240 *A brief Exposition of the* Chap.  
*Verſ. 5. Likewise ye younger, ſubmit your ſelves unto the*  
*elder: yea, all of you be ſubject one to another, and be*  
*clothed with humility: for, God reſiſteth the proud, and*  
*giveth grace to the humble.*

The Apoſtle, having in the former part of the Chap-  
 ter, exhorted the Officers of the Church to their duty ;  
 In the ſecond part, he pointeth out the duties of the flock,  
 whom he deſigneth by the name of *younger*, not only be-  
 cauſe the moſt part of them are ordinarily younger in  
 years, than their Officers ; but, mainly, becauſe in their  
 diſpoſition and carriage toward their Overſeers, they  
 ſhould ſhew ſome reſemblance of that reverence and  
 obedience, which is ſuitable in young ones, toward the  
 aged : And their duty he holdeth forth in ſix directions.  
 The firſt which belongeth to them, conſidered only as  
 they are under the charge of their Officers, is, ſubjection  
 to them in the Lord, which importeth obedience to their  
 meſſage, and reſpect to their perſons. The ſecond, which  
 concerns them mainly as fellow-members of the Church,  
 is, mutual ſubjection of one to another in all the duties  
 of love. The third, which holdeth forth the ſpecial mean  
 of attaining to the former two, is, that they ſhould adorn  
 themſelves with a mean eſteem of themſelves : and this  
 the Apoſtle preſſeth by two arguments ; The one is, that  
 the Lord oppoſeth himſelf to them that liſt up them-  
 ſelves. And the other is, that he giveth his favour and  
 grace to them that abaſe themſelves. Hence *Learn, 1.*  
*It is the duty of the Lord's People, to be ſubject to their*  
*Rulers whom he hath ſet over them in his Church, by*  
*submitting to the duties which they preſſe upon them*  
*from the Word, Heb. 13. 12. and to the cenſures they*  
*inſult according to the Word, 2 Cor. 2. 9. by affording*  
*them ſome means of outward ſubſiſtence, Gal. 6. 6. and*  
*by giving ſome reſpect to their perſons, becauſe of their*  
*Office, 1 Cor. 4. 1. in reſpect whereof they are liſt up*  
*by the Lord above his People, as the word here ſignifieth*  
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for, the substance of the duty of the flock to their Church Officers, is here by the Apostle comprehended in this one word, *Be subject*, 2. Whether the Members of the Church be younger or elder in years, they should, in reference to their Overseers, resemble that disposition and carriage, which becometh young ones toward the elder, in their earnest desire of the Word, and means of salvation administred by them, *chap. 2. 3.* by depending upon them, as instruments, for counsel in their difficult cases, *Mat. 2. 7.* calling for their help and assistance under their crosses, *Jam. 5. 14.* and by their meek submission to censures from them, *Heb. 13. 17.* for, it is mainly in respect of the resemblance that should be betwixt the disposition of the Flock in reference to their Pastors and Overseers, and that of Children toward their Parents, or such as have the charge of them, that the Apostle thus designeth them; *Ye younger be subject to the elder.* 3. The obligation of the Lord's People to their duty toward their Overseers, is no lesse strait, than that of their Overseers to their duty toward them, and therefore their hazard in neglecting their duty can be no lesse than theirs: for, the Apostle beareth in their duty upon them toward their Overseers, by such a word as importeth an equality in the strictnesse of the tye, *Likewise ye younger be subject to the elder.* 4. There is a mutual subjection due by every one of the Lord's People toward another, which consists in their condescendency to reprove one another in love, for their faults, *Lev. 19. 17.* their instructing and admonishing one another concerning their duty, *Col. 3. 16.* in their taking well with reproofs and admonitions one from another, *Psal. 141. 5.* and in their stooping to all the duties of charity one toward another, *Gal. 5. 13.* and the like. All which is comprehended in this second direction given to the Members of the Church, in reference to their fellow-members; *Ye, all of you be subject one to another.* 5. However men appointed for destruction, do glory in their pride and violence, wherewith they think themselves adorned, *Psal. 73. 6.*



18, 19. Yet the grace of humility, whereby a Christian hath a mean esteem of himself, flowing from the sense of his own sinfulness, 1 Cor. 15. 9. and of the undeserved good-will of God, 1 Sam. 7. 18, 20. whereby he is inclined to prefer others to himself, Rom. 12. 10. not desiring more esteem from others than God alloweth him to have, 1 Cor. 3. 5. and 4. 6. and taketh well with all chastisements from God as lesse than his deserving, Ezr. 9. 13. is the prime ornament of Christians, which they should tie about them, and delight to wear, as the word here signifies, and be no lesse ashamed to appear without, than without their clothing; *Be clothed with humility.* 6. There can be no right discharge of any duty that the Lord's People owe to Superiours, inferiours, or equals, until they get from God that humble frame of spirit, formerly described: for, this exhortation may be taken for a mean of attaining to the former duties; *And be clothed with humility.* 7. Although the Lord may suffer proud sinners to prosper in their sins for a time, Psal. 73. 4, 5. Yet he doth still stand in battel array (as the word here translated, *to resist*, signifieth) against them, and will take his fittest opportunity to bear down all that live in that sin of pride, which doth manifest it self in the slighting of the study of reconciliation with God through Christ, Psal. 10. 4. the neglect of clear duties prest by the Word, Neh. 9. 16, 17, 29. and in unthankfulness to God for his mercies, 2 Chron. 32. 25, 26. The consideration of which opposition from God, should make the study of humility, lovely; and pride, hateful to the Lord's People, as they would not have God for their party: for, this is a reason to presse humility, *God resisteth the proud.* 8. The sweet proots of God's favour, and the increase of the graces of his Spirit, is that which every humble sinner may expect, which should commend the grace of humilitie to them, and make them study the exercise of it: for, both these are comprehended in this second argument, pressing them to put on this ornament, *God giveth grace to the humble.*

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*Verf. 6. Humble your selves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time.*

The Apostle doth here again urge his former exhortation to the study of humility, especially under the cross, by two further arguments, The one taken from the omnipotency of God, which is able to crush the proud, and carry the humble through all their straits. The other from the certainty of the humble person's deliverance, which is promised in the season fittest for it. Hence *Learn*, 1. Humility is a lesson so hard to be learned, that Christ's Ministers had need to presse the same frequently upon his People, and study many arguments to bear it in upon them: for, the Apostle, having in the former verse, by very strong reasons, perswaded them to clothe themselves with that ornament, he doth here again by other arguments, presse the same in substance; *Humble your selves under the mighty hand of God, &c.* 2. The consideration of the mighty power of God, which is sufficiently able to protect and bear through all his Followers. *Job. 10. 28.* and to find out, and punish all that oppose him, or them, *Psal. 21. 8, 9.* should move the Lord's people humbly to submit to their duty, and to the hardest dispensation in following thereof: for, his Almighty Power, here signified by his Hand, is mentioned as a further reason of his Peoples humbling of themselves; *Humble your selves therefore under the mighty hand of God.* 3. Although the Lord's People who have attained to some approved measure of the exercise of this grace of humility, under their straits, may not expect a present deliverance out of them, *Hab. 2. 1, 3.* Yet their delivery is made sure for them, and they are certified by his faithful Word, that they shall be carried through till they meet with it: for, though he do not promise here to the humble, that they shall be presently exalted; Yet he maketh them sure of this, that if they humble themselves under his mighty hand, they shall be exalted. 4. The

liverance of the Lord's humble People cometh alwayes to them in the fittest time, which is, when the Lord hath perfected his work intended by their affliction, *Isa. 10. 12.* particularly when they are brought to that measure of humiliation, to which by their straits the Lord intends to bring them, *Lev. 26. 41.* when they are prepared by their straits to put a due price upon a delivery, *Psal. 102. 13, 14.* and when the cup of their enemies iniquity is full, *Gen. 35. 16.* for, this word signifieth both the opportunity fixed, and fittest for the exaltation of the humble, *He shall exalt you in due time.*

*Verf. 7. Casting all your care upon him, for he careth for you.*

The fourth direction, which is brought in as a special mean of attaining to the former, is, that Believers should by faith commit unto the Lord their thorow-bearing in their duty, the event thereof, and all their anxiety about these; and that because the Lord's loving providence doth not suffer him to neglect them, or any of their concerns. Hence *Learn, 1.* The Children of the Lord are subject to much sinfull anxiety in following of their duty; which appeareth when they are hindered from their duty, by looking more to their own weaknesse, and the difficulties in the way of duty, than to the sufficiency promised by him that calleth them to it, *Exod. 3. 11.* or when they are discouraged in their duty by the apprehension of probable hazards in the way of it, *Isa. 37. 12, 13.* of which evil the Spirit of the Lord would have them sensible, while he findeth it necessary thus to exhort them; *Casting all your care on him.* 2. Although it be most commendable in Christians, to entertain such a care of discharging their duty aright, and of eschewing what may provoke the Lord in their way of going about it, as stirreth them up to much diligence, and employing of Jesus Christ, 2 *Cor. 7. 11.* Yet such a care, whether anent the manner of their going about their duty, or the success and event thereof, as doth distract their heart in duty,

duty, and indispose them for it, & sinful, and so be stricken off by all that would discharge their duty acceptably: for, so doth the Apostle here direct, *Casting all your care upon him.* 3. The way to be liberated of anxiety and heart-dividing cares, which indispose for duty, is, by prayer to commend the successe and event of our duty, and our thorow-bearing therein to the Lord, *Philip. 4. 6.* and by faith to commit both to him, *Prov. 16. 3.* for, this is here the direction of the Spirit of the Lord for attaining to freedom from sinfull anxiety, *Casting all your care upon him.* 4. The Lord alloweth his Children to cast upon him all their anxieties, both such as they have about their souls and matters of highest concernment, and those about their bodies, and lesser matters; how small soever the thing be where-about their heart becometh anxious, he alloweth them to commit the same to him; for, he knoweth that a very small matter is ready to occasion much vexation of spirit to his own, *Jona. 4. 8.* Therefore doth he thus direct them, to *cast all their care upon him.* 5. It is not only the privilege of Believers that they may disburden themselves of their distrustful heart-dividing cares, by casting them over upon the Lord; but it is also the very great desire of our God, that we should not sink under the insupportable burden of our own needlesse cares and fears; Yea, it is his peremptory command, to put these off our selves upon him, which his People may not disobey, except they would incur his displeasure and destroy themselves: for, this hath the force of a command, *Casting all your care upon him.* 6. As no duty can be rightly discharged by us while the Lord is not trusted with our thorow-bearing in it, and with the event and successe thereof, or, while the heart is distracted with misbelieving anxiety about these; So the trusting of God with these, is the best way to come speed in every duty: for, the Apostle, having exhorted before to duties toward their Overseers, to one another, and to God, he brings in this as a means of attaining to all these, without which none of them could,

be ascribed unto him. *Casting all your care upon him.* 7. *Mis-*  
*believing anxiety.* whereby Christians break themselves  
 with the burden of these cares, which God requires to  
 be cast upon him, is one of the greatest signs of pride in  
 the world; and to trust God with the weight of these  
 in following our duty, is a prime evidence of true humi-  
 lity: for, this is brought in as a special way how they  
 should prove themselves to be humbled under God's  
 mighty hand, and as that without which they could not  
 but declare their pride: as both the construction of the  
 words, and their connexion wth the former, do import;  
*Humble your selves, &c. casting all your care upon him.*  
 8. Although the Lord be altogether free of such passions,  
 as care, sorrow, and the like, which are in men, *Numb.*  
*23. 19.* Yet those of his People that cast their care upon  
 him shall find no lesse proofs of his love, both in ward-  
 ing off hazards, so far as is necessary, and providing  
 every thing needful for them, than if he were as solici-  
 tous for their wel-being as they can be for themselves;  
 the consideration whereof, should liberate their hearts of  
 their distrustful cares: for, this is here asserted, as a rea-  
 son enforcing the fourth direction, *He careth for you.*  
 9. While the Lord's People take upon themselves the  
 weight of their matters, and have their hearts distracted  
 with cares about their thorow-bearing in, and the event  
 of, their duties, they do not then believe the fatherly  
 providence of God watching over them for their good,  
 the faith whereof could not but banish their anxieties;  
 as is imported in the connexion of this reason with the  
 direction, *Casting all your care upon him, for he careth*  
*for you.*

*Ver. 8. Be sober, be vigilant: because your adversary the*  
*Devil, as a roaring Lion walketh about seeking whom he*  
*may devour.*

The fifth direction is, That Christians should prepare  
 themselves for the spiritual warfare against their great  
 enemy,

enemy, Satan. And for this end he sheweth what frame of spirit and carriage, becometh a Souldier of Christ, in two directions, preparatory to this warfare. The one is, That they should meddle sparingly with the delights of this present life. The other is, That they should still be upon their watch, lest they be surpris'd by their spiritual enemies, and to move them hereunto, he describeth their prime enemy, Satan, from his great enmity, unwearied activity, and insatiable cruelty, as for many arguments to sobriety and vigilancy. Hence *Lev. 1.* They that are most conscionable in their duty, and have come nearest to the right manner of going about it, have reason to make them for the hottest battel, and forest assaults from Satan, to hinder or discourage them therein: for, the Apostle (having directed the Flock of Christ in the former words, to their several duties, and to the right mannes of going about them, with humility and confidence, ) doth here exhort them to prepare for a battel in that way, and for this end thus instructeth them for it, *Be sober, be vigilant: because your adversary cre.* 2. Every one that would be a good Souldier in this holy War against Satan, must labour for a sober frame of spirit, whereby Christians esteem meanly of their own abilities, *Rom. 12. 3.* they keep down the kything of their passions against those that injure them, *Act. 28. 25.* and meddle sparingly, even with lawful delights, the excess whereof becomes sewel to Satan's temptations, and overchargeth the heart, so as it cannot foresee, and guard against hazard from him, *Luk. 21. 34.* for, this is the first preparatory direction given to Souldiers in this spiritual warfare, *Be sober.* 3. Holy watchfulness, whereby a Christian forecasseth hazards, and guardeth against them, is also required in a Christian Warriour, without which he cannot but be surpris'd, and made a slave to his adversary the Devil: for, to prepare Believers for this battel, the Apostle gives this second direction, *Be vigilant.* 4. Satan is such an enemy as in opposing the Lord's People, pleadeth Law and Equity upon his side, and by

Law would carry his point against all that are come of Adam, were it not Christ hath freed Law-breakers, who believe in him, from the curse of the Law, *Gal. 3. 13.* for, this stile of Satan's, *Your adversary*, imports, an adversary in some suit of Law. 5. Of all the enemies of the People of God, whereof they have many both within, *1 Pet. 2. 11.* and without, *Psal. 3. 1.* Satan is the chief, acting in, and by all the rest, and far exceeding them all in power and policy, and therefore to be especially watched against and opposed: for, he is here called, *That adversary the Devil*. 6. Satan watcheth all possible advantages of prevailing against the Children of the Lord by his temptations, compassing them round about, that he may espy where they are weakest, or least afraid of hazard, that there he may assault them: for, he is an *adversary that goeth about*. 7. There is no outwearying of Satan in this warfare, by never so much opposition or frequent disappointments, he is still in action against the Lord's People, which should provoke them to constant watchfulness and imployment of Jesus Christ for strength against him: for, his constant activity is here set forth by a word in the present time, as a motive to sobriety and vigilancy, *Your adversary goeth about*. 8. Satan is a very powerful enemy and a terrible, and so cruel, that no lesse than the utter destruction of souls can satisfie him: for, he is here described by the similitude of one of the most powerful, terrible, and cruelest of beasts, *A roaring Lion seeking whom he may devour*. 9. All the activity, power, terror, and cruelty of the Devil, should be so far from discouraging the Lord's People in the battel against him, that the consideration thereof should animate and hearten them to the same, considering that he is an enemy spoiled by Jesus Christ, *Col. 2. 15.* that there is more power to be imployed for Believers than is against them, *2 King. 6. 16.* and that victory over Satan is sure, and near to all Believers, *Rom. 16. 20.* for, as an argument to sobriety, vigilancy, and the exercise of other graces and duties, formerly pressed upon Believers their adversary

Chap. 5.  
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Verf. 9.  
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is thus described, he goes about like a roaring Lion seeking whom he may devour.

Verf. 9. *Whom resist steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your Brethren that are in the world.*

Here is the sixth and last direction, wherein the Apostle presseth the great duty of spiritual Warriours, to wit, resistance of their great enemy, Satan; and withall, holds forth the right way of maintaining that holy warfare against him, which is, by constant adhering to the truths of the Gospel, and resting by faith upon the promises thereof, notwithstanding of all afflictions in that way; to which the Apostle giveth this encouragement, That they had all the rest of the Lord's People in the world for their fellow-souldiers, each of them filling up their own measure of hardship in this battel. Hence *Learn*, 1. Although the power and policy of our spiritual adversary be exceeding great, as was shown from the former verses, yet none of Christ's Souldiers must think of flying from him, or yeelding to him in the least, But must make them for a stout and peremptory resistance of him in all his temptations; considering, that the more place be yeelded unto him, he tyrannizeth the more, *Mat. 12. 49. &c.* and the more stoutly he be opposed, the more ground he loseth, *Jam. 4. 7.* for, this is the order which Christ's Souldiers have received from their General Jesus Christ, concerning Satan and his temptations, *Whom resist, &c.* 2. The principal mean whereby Believers beat back Satan and his temptations, is their constant adhering to the truth of the Gospel, whatever they may suffer for their so doing, and their maintaining of their interest in Christ and the promises; both which are comprehended in this direction, holding forth the right manner of opposing Satan, *Whom resist steadfast in the faith.* 3. The strongest of Satan's temptations, are conveyed to the Godly through afflictions, under which his temptations

are



are ordinarily most prevalent with them, to make them  
 quit the Truth, or their duty, or else to ding them from  
 their confidence in adhering to these: Therefore the  
 Apostle, giving an encouragement to oppose Satan's  
 temptations, he suiteth the same for an afflicted condi-  
 tion, importing, that through affliction the greatest tem-  
 ptations are ordinarily conveyed to the Godly, *Whom  
 resist, &c. knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished  
 in your Brethren.* 4. It is an ordinary and strong tem-  
 ptation which Satan suggests to the hearts of the Godly,  
 That they are singular and matchlesse in their sufferings;  
 that so he may make them question their Fathers affecti-  
 on, and put themselves out of the number of his Chil-  
 dren, because of their afflictions: for, this is the tempta-  
 tion which the Apostle mainly guards the hearts of suf-  
 ferers against, while he saith, *Knowing that the same  
 afflictions are accomplished in your Brethren that are in the  
 world.* 5. It ought to be a great encouragement to suf-  
 ferers, in that battel against their temptations which ac-  
 company their afflictions, to consider, that their lot is no  
 harder than the rest of the Saints of God through the  
 world, from whom they may expect sympathy, and the  
 help of their prayers: for, this is here given as an en-  
 couragement to the battel against Satan's temptations,  
 notwithstanding of afflictions in the way of their duty,  
*That the same afflictions were accomplished in their Brethren  
 that are in the world.*

*Verf. 10. But the God of all grace, who hath called us into  
 his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suf-  
 fered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle  
 you.*

Followeth the last part of the Chapter, which is the  
 Conclusion of the whole Epistle, containing several ar-  
 ticles. In the first, the Apostle betakes himself to God by  
 prayer for these suffering Christians, that the begun work  
 of grace in them might be carried on to perfection: and

for that end, that they might be established in what they had already attained, that their spiritual strength for all their duties and difficulties, might be renewed and increased, and their union with Christ the foundation made more and more firm (which is the signification of these several expressions in the Apostle's petition) and for the strengthening of his faith, and theirs: concerning the hearing of this prayer he takes hold of the almighty grace which is in God, and makes use of the sweet proof thereof, which they had already received in the Lord's calling of them by the Gospel to the possession of his everlasting blessedness through the Mediator, after they had wrestled a little while through a few difficulties in the way to it. Hence *Learn, 1.* The Ministers of Christ ought not to satisfy themselves with the pressing of pertinent duties upon the Lord's People, and holding forth fitting encouragements to be made use of by them, that thereby people may come to the knowledge and approbation of their doctrine; but they must also by prayer and faith put over upon the Lord to work in the people what they have pressed, and must go before them to the Fountain of furniture, that so the people may apprehend a necessity of divine influence to concur with men's best gifts in order to their profiting, without which neither Ministers pains, nor people's resolutions or endeavours, can have success, *Rom. 9. 26.* For, so doth the Apostle here put over upon the Lord by prayer, to work in the people that which was his main scope in preaching and writing to them, *But the God of all grace, &c. make you perfect; &c.* 2. It may be a great comfort to the Lord's People, and encouragement in their duty, when the Lord sends them such Messengers, as have not only ability to clear their duty, and hold forth their encouragements to them, but such as have also skill of wrestling in prayer with God for them, to draw down the blessing upon their doctrine, and by their practice of that duty of prayer before the Lord's People, to direct them in the right manner of going about it: *Rejoice*  
may

may be taken for a sweet encouragement to them to study the duties he had prest upon them, that they had the Apostle, so earnest and skilful a wrestler with God for them, putting up, as it were, in their hearing such pertinent petitions on their behalf, and making use of such strong grounds of confidence, as was fitting for the strengthening of their faith and his, that he should be heard. *The God of all grace, who hath called us to his eternal glory by Jesus Christ, after ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, &c.* 3. Even those of the Lord's People, who are furthest advanced in grace, are far short of that measure of perfection which is attainable; they are oftentimes like a member out of joynt, (as the first expression here in the Apostle's prayer signifies) both in regard of their own inward distempers, *Psal. 22. 14.* and of their divisions among themselves; for healing whereof, *Paul* useth the same word in his exhortation to the *Corinthians*, *1 Ep. 13. 11.* they are not so hardened against, nor resolute as they ought to be to meet with further difficulties, as the next expression in his prayer imports; They are far from that vigour, and ability for their duties and crosses, and from that close adherence to Christ the Foundation-stone, (as the two last expressions import) that they might be at: Of all which defects, every one that desires to thrive in grace, would labour to be sensible, that so they may be humble, and stirred up to greater progresse: for which cause, the Apostle maketh use of such expressions in his petitions, as might represent to the minds of the people (of whose progresse he had spoken much before) their several defects, *The God of all grace make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.* 4. It ought to be the great aim and design of Ministers, in all their labours with God, and with the people, That those who have attained to some good measure of grace, may not rest satisfied with the same. But may be stirred up to aim at progresse and perfection therein: and for that end may have their inward distempers and mutual divisions healed, as a broken member is set in joynt again, that they

they may be made able for their duties, and hardened against their trials; and that they may be better built upon the Foundation Christ, by a more hearty embracing of his offered Grace, and firm adherence to his Truth: for, these are the things which the Apostle hath aimed at in his writing this Epistle to these persecuted *Hebrews*, and in his prayer to God for them, as is clear by the signification of the words in the Original, *The God of all grace make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.*

5. There is in God an Allsufficiency of every grace, and withall, a strong propension to communicate the same freely to unworthy sinners, the consideration whereof should hearten both Ministers and People to pray for, and expect a more plentiful measure thereof, than what they have already received: for, this first ground of confidence, which the Apostle makes use of, to strengthen his own and the peoples faith for obtaining of what he seeks here, includeth both the abundance of grace that is in God, and his gracious inclination to communicate the same freely; in both which respects, he is here called, *The God of all grace.*

6. Whether the Lord's People consider that woful case out of which they are called by the Gospel, *Col. 1. 13.* or that blessed state to which they are called, *1 Cor. 1. 9.* they may take his calling of them for a sure ground to their faith (if so be they have consented to his call) concerning his willingness to give them every thing necessary for their perseverance, till they come to the possession of what he hath called them to: for this is a second ground of confidence which the Apostle makes use of to obtain what he seeks, hereby teaching the people to make use of the same, *That God had called them unto his eternal glory.*

7. The blessedness which the Gospel calleth sinners to possess, is such, as they that obey the Call can never be put from the possession of it; Yea, it is of the same kind with that which the Lord himself liveth in, *glorious for ever*, So that they share with Him of his own blessedness, so far as they are capable, *Joh. 17. 22.* for, that blessedness where-

these sinners are called by the Gospel, is here called, *the eternal glory*. 8. It is by Jesus Christ the Mediator, that sinners are called to the possession of this eternal glory; He by his blood hath purchased it for them, *Eph. 1. 10.* by His Word and Spirit doth clear to them the way to it, *1 Tim. 1. 10.* Yea; He himself is the way, and quickeneth His Redeemed Ones to walk in it, *Joh. 14. 6.* for, *we are called to his eternal glory by Jesus Christ*. 9. The way to eternal glory lieth through sufferings, so that none have ground to expect it any other way: for, this clause, *after ye have suffered*, may be knit to the words going before, *who hath called us into his eternal glory by Jesus Christ, after ye have suffered*. 10. Those who get grace to adventure upon sufferings for Christ and His Truth, with the small measure of strength and grace which they have already attained, may expect a further degree of perfection, and a greater measure of strength, and stability, after they have suffered a while: the Lord makes trials discover to his People the weaknesse of his grace in them, and that discovery, to chase them to himself, who loveth to let out liberally upon sufferers, *chap. 4. 14.* for, this clause may be also knit with the following petitions, *After ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, &c.* 11. Even the hardest of the Lord's Peoples sufferings are of small weight, being compared with the reward, *2 Cor. 4. 17.* and of short continuance, being compared with eternity, *2 Pet. 3. 8.* the consideration whereof may hearten the Lord's People under them all: for, in both these respects may this encouragement be understood; that they are *but for a while*, or, a *very little*.

Vers. 11. *To Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever.*  
*Amen.*

The next article of the Conclusion of the Epistle, containeth a song of praise to God; wherein the Church acknowledgeth Him worthy to be glorified and praised.

by all, as their Sovereign Lord unto all eternity; and by his so doing, expresseth his faith of being heard in his former petitions, that so the people for whom he prayed might with the like confidence joyn with him in this song. Hence *Leam*, 1. Christ's Ministers should carry a praising disposition in their hearts all-along their work, and be ready frequently to break forth in some expressions thereof before the Lord's People, especially in a suffering time: for, the Apostle raised one song of praise at the beginning of this Epistle, *chap. 1. ver. 3.* another, *chap. 4. 11.* and here in the Conclusion takes it up again, *To Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever.* 2. While the Lord's People are praying for a further measure of his grace, they should joyn praise therewith, acknowledging Him to be glorious in Himself, and worthy of all glory from others, to have dominion over all; and wishing that His glory may be seen and acknowledged, and His dominion submitted unto, in testimony of their thankfulness for that measure of His grace which they have already received, and of their confidence grounded upon their knowledge of His gracious Nature, and their former experience of His Grace already bestowed upon them: for, upon these grounds, the Apostle, having prayed for the Peoples perseverance; stability and perfection, doth here praise, and lead them so to do: *To Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever.* 3. When ever the Lord's People see aright how gracious the Lord is, and hath manifested Himself to be, in the effects of his Grace to them in the Gospel, they cannot but have their hearts raised to glorifie Him, and to wish that many might be subject to Him: for, the Apostle, having set forth the Lord, as the God of all Grace, who had graciously called sinners to partake of his own eternal glory, doth now break forth in praise, as that which in all hearts were sensible of what he had said, could not but agree with him. *To Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever.* 4. Where there is a real and kindly desire of attaining glory and dominion to the Lord, it will cannot

self beyond all time and ages, even toward the length of eternity; considering, that His love, and the proofs thereof, will follow His own that length; and that His excellency, and the worth of His favours bestowed upon His People are such, as unto all eternity they will not be able sufficiently to acknowledge; and therefore will desire that *Glory and Dominion may be given to Him for ever and ever.* 5. While we ascribe glory and dominion to the Lord, there should be in our hearts strong desires, that His glory may be known and acknowledged, His dominion enlarged and submitted unto, and much confidence that it shall be so. He having engaged his faithfulness for that effect, *Isa. 45. 23.* for, this word wherewith both prayer and praise useth to be closed, signifies both desire and confidence, *Amen.*

*Verf. 12. By Silvanus a faithful Brother unto you (as I suppose) I have written briefly, exhorting, and testifying, that this is the true Grace of God wherein ye stand.*

The third article of the Conclusion of this Epistle, containeth two branches. In the first, the Apostle commendeth the Bearer of the Epistle (who was to explain and apply the purpose of it to them, he being a publick Minister, *2 Cor. 1. 19.*) from his fidelity and near relation to himself and them, as he had good ground in charity to judge of him. In the next, he commendeth the Epistle it self, 1. from the shortness of it: and 2. from the sweet scope thereof, which was to stir them up to their duty, and to bear witness to the Doctrine of God's Free-grace, whereunto they did adhere. Hence *Learn, 1.* Though saving Truth should be heartily embraced, who ever they be that carry it, *Philip. 1. 15, 18.* Yet it contributes for the better acceptance thereof, that those who deliver it, deserve and have a good esteem amongst those to whom it is delivered, and be looked upon by them as having a special respect to their good: for, to make the Epistle the more acceptable to those to whom it is delivered.

directed, the Apostle commendeth him that carried it, and was to open it up unto them, as one faithfull in his Office, and loving toward them. *By Silvanus a faithfull Brother unto you.* 2. It becomes those who are of longer standing and more eminent gifts in the Ministry, so be so far from undervaluing or slighting those who are of shorter standing and meaner gifts, that they ought to gain to them all the respect and esteem they can, among the Lord's people for the Message sake which they carry; for, this Apostle, being among the first of those that Christ called immediately to the service of the Gospel, and eminently honoured by him, to be a Pen-man of Scripture, doth here commend *Silvanus* (of whom there was no mention in Christ's dayes, and who was only an ordinary Minister, called to expound the written Word) as if he had been in all respects his equal. *By Silvanus a faithfull Brother.* 3. It is the great commendation of a Minister of Christ, that he be faithfull in his Master's service, by improving his talents, whether more or fewer, for His glory, *Mat. 25. 21, 23.* and that he have a brotherly affection toward his fellow-labourers, expressing the same by working to their hands in the work of the Gospel, *Col. 4. 11.* and to the people, by a humble and affectionate care of their good, as if they were his brethren, *Philip. 4. 1.* for, this is the commendation of *Silvanus, A faithfull Brother to you.* 4. It is to be noted, that we withhold our testimony concerning the fidelity of others, when we have grounds for charity, that they do deserve it, nor to be positive and superlative in commendation of any, as if we were infallibly perswaded of their faithfulness: for, the Apostle giveth this commendation to *Silvanus* of his faithfulness, with such an adjection as signifies a judgment of charity concerning him, which the Apostle had gathered by several probable grounds and reasons; and yet the expression doth import an inferior degree of certainty, to that which he had concerning his own office and fidelity in his Calling, *Rom. 8. 38. 39.* *By Silvanus a faithfull Brother, as I suppose.* 5. It is



A necessary favour to the Church and People of God, to have the mind of God given unto them in writing, to be a standing Rule for trial of every thing that is presented to his mind, *1/a. 4. 20.* to help their frail memories the better to remember His Truth, *1/a. 30. 8.* to prevent mistakes among His People concerning His mind, which would far more readily arise, if it had been only delivered in so transient a way as *Sejan's* oracles are; and that His People, when they have not occasion to hear His Mind preached or spoken by others, may have it with them to read and meditate upon, *2d. 8. 28.* for, though this Apostle, and others, had preached the substance of *the Doctrine* contained in this Epistle, to these same persons to whom it is directed, *2d. 1. 1. 1. 1. 1. 1.* and though they had *Silvanus*, a man able to preach the Gospel, coming to them. Yet the Spirit of the Lord finds it necessary to write his mind to them; *By Silvanus, &c. I have written unto you.* 6. It is a commendable thing in Christ's Servants, and a special gift of God's to them, to be able to deliver much of the Lords Mind to His People in a love words, providing it be with plainness of speech. So will people be the more able to comprehend in their judgment, and retain in their memory, what is delivered to them; for, the Apostle commends this Epistle, which both in the heads of all saving Truths, delivered in much plainness of speech, from the shortness of it; *I have written unto you briefly.* 7. It is necessary for Christ's Ministers to make use of several strains of Doctrine, in dealing with people; sometimes to exhort them, and that with much earnestness and vehemency to their duty, sometimes to comfort them against discouragements in the way of their duty; both which are in the signification of the first word *Exhorting*: at other times again, in bare witness to the Truths they deliver, as a thing themselves know experimentally, and believe to be the Truth of God. *Job. 3. 14.* confirming the same from other places of Scripture, *2d. 16. 22.* and *2d. 23.* and finally, to tell them that reject or disobey the same, *2d. 6.*

19. according to the signification of the past word, *testifying*: by both which the Apostle holdeth forth his several strains of dealing with the people, especially in this Epistle, and these as a pattern to Ministers, *Exhorting and testifying*. 8. The sum of the Gospel, and of all right preaching thereof, is, To make offer unto sinners of the rich and free grace of God, for pardoning, sanctifying, and saving of them: to stir them up to imbrace that offer, and having embraced it, to study the exercise of grace, and walking like gracious persons, in the obedience of that Doctrine: for here, the Apostle giveth the sum and scope of this Epistle, which is the same with that of the whole Word, *To exhort and testify that this is the true grace of God*. 9. The Doctrine of the Gospel will deceive none that receive it, they will find the Lord as gracious, and his wayes as sweet as the Gospel affirms: for it is the true grace of God. 10. Even those who have made good progresse in grace, and are for the present fixed in their adherance to the Truth, are in hazard to be shaken by temptations, and made to question the truth of the Gospel, and the reality of the gracious offers made therein: as is imported in this, that the Spirit of the Lord findeth it necessary to put the Apostle upon writing an Epistle to such, for *exhorting and testifying, that it was the true grace of God wherein they did stand*.

Verf. 13. *The Church that is at Babylon greets you, and so doth Marcus my son.*

Here is the fourth article of the Conclusion of this Epistle, wherein the Apostle delivers salutations to the scattered Jews; 1. From those Christians at Babylon, whom the Lord had chosen out of the world, to be a Church to himself, and to shew rich others of His People in speciall and eternal mercies. This Church at Babylon seems to have been made up of the posterity of those Jews, who stayed there after the expiring of the seventy years captivity, whom this Apostle, being a Jew himself,

the Circumcision, Gal. 2. 7. hath gone to visit, and planted in a visible Church. And next he delivers commendations from Mark, who was a publick Minister of the Gospel, Gal. 4. 10, 11. and being one of this Apostles old acquaintance, 18. 13. 12. hath been instructed by him in the Gospel, for which he is here called his son, as Timothy is called Pauls for the same reason, 1 Tim. 1. 2. Hence Learn, 1. It is the duty of the Lord's People (especially in a suffering time) though never so far distant in place, to love and remember one another as if they were present, and embracing one another, as the word of saluting in the Original imports, to signifie their desires to know one anothers condition, their sympathy with one anothers suffering, and joy for one anothers welfare: all which is imported in the salutation common among the Hebrews, 1 Sam. 25. 25. 1 Chron. 18. 10. And it is likewise the duty of those who are intrusted with the carrying of such salutations, to make conscience of the delivery of them: for, the Church at Babylon remembereth their dispersed Countrymen, and desireth the Apostle to signifie the same to them, who doth it here accordingly: *The Church which is at Babylon salutesh you.* 2. The Lord who reigneth in the midst of His enemies, Psal. 110. 2. can erect and keep up a Church to himself, even in those places of the world where His enemies are permitted to have all the external power in their hand: for, He hath here a Church at Babylon, where we never read that the civil-power was employed for Him. 3. The Lord hath many designs of providence, which will not appear for a long time after. He hath begun to work in order to the execution of them: for, now it appears that when the Jews were carried captive to Babylon, the Lord hath had a design to have a Gospel-church erected there before they should all come back again: as is clear by comparing Acts 17. 18. with this, that there is a Church at Babylon. 4. The Lord can make the sinful sinners of His People, subservient to His gracious purposes, and so to hold in all His ways: for, the sinful King of some

of the Jews in Babylon when they had a call and opportunity to return in Cyrus's time, is made so far from the accomplishment of this holy purpose of God, as it is the having of a visible Gospel-Church at Babylon; 3. The constancy of some of the Lords People, who are under the power of wicked men, and the appearance of the grace of Christ in them, especially their love and sympathy with the rest of His People, ought to move others to constancy under their sufferings, and make them confident of the same sorrow-bearing strength; for as the Apostle may encourage these suffering-Believers, to whom he writeth, he sendeth them here commendations from their Brethren in Babylon, in testimony of their love to, and sympathy with them; *The Church which is at Babylon saluteth you.* 6. No journey never so long or hazardous ought to be shunned by any Servant of Christ, to do service to Him, who hath engaged Himself to be with them go whither they will; *Mark. 16. 20.* In the faith whereof *Peter* hath undertaken this long and hazardous journey from Judea to Babylon, from whence he sendeth this Epistle to the rest of the Christian Jews. 7. Because all the Members of the visible Church are chosen out of the world, to profess Christ, and to have the offers of His grace made to them; and so many of them as do really imbrace these offers, have doubtlesse been eternally chosen to be equal sharers of spiritual and eternal mercies, Therefore they may be all spoken of, and dealt with by Christ's Ministers, as *the Elect of God*; for so doth the Apostle here speak of the whole visible Churches, at Babylon, and other places, *Elect together.* 8. It is a special comfort to suffering-Christians, to know themselves remembered and respected by more eminent Christians than themselves, by whom they are apt to apprehend themselves forgotten and slighted: for which cause we may safely conceive the Apostle here to mention commendations particularly from *Marcus his son.* 9. Those who have been instrumental in the conversion or spiritual edification of others, ought to entertain a

special measure of tender affection toward them; and should have from them a special measure of reverence and love: such as children owe to their parents: for, because *Mark* was instructed by this Apostle, in the knowledge of Christ and the Gospel, and did resemble him in faith and conversation, he is here called *his son*. 10. A penitent's former failings ought not to hinder his esteem with any of the Lords People: for, *Mark*, who by his separating from the Apostles while they were about the Work of the Lord, did occasion a sinful separation of one of them from another, *Mk. 15. 37, 38, 39.* is here particularly mentioned, as one dear to this Apostle, and whose love and remembrance should be a comfort to sufferers; *And Marcom my son. 11.* So careful should the Ministers of Christ be to entertain love among the Lords People; and particularly to beget and cherish in their hearts, a good esteem of other Ministers, though inferior to themselves, that they should willingly condescend to be servants in the meanest offices of love, that may conduce for that end; Therefore doth this great Apostle register in his Epistle the commendations of the *Church at Babylon*, and *Marcom his son*.

**Verf. 14.** Greet ye one another with a kisse of charity: Peace be unto you all that are in Christ Jesus. Amen.

In this last article of the Conclusion, the Apostle exhorted them to whom he writeth, to expresse mutually their hearty affection one to another, by such signs as were ordinary in those times, and confidently witness unto them all sort of happiness. Hence *Learn*, 1. It doth much contribute for the success of the Gospel among a people, that there be mutual love amongst them, and expressions thereof: Therefore the Apostles do ordinarily close their Epistles with exhortations to mutual love and unity, as that without which, the fruit of the Gospel in these Writings would be much hindered; and so doth the Apostle here, *Greet ye one another with a kisse of charity.*

1. *Whatsoever is the expression of mutual respect and love between members of the Church and others where the Lord's People live, they ought not to be neglected as, but rather made conscious of, by them, in attendance to Him: who is concerned for and respect, and consequently the expressions should not be among His People; Greet one another with a kiss of charity.* 2. All the mutual expressions of love and respect among the Lord's People, ought to flow from an inward affection of christian love in the heart of one of them towards another, and ought not to be performed as feigning and flattering compliments, which are hateful to God, *Psalm 12. 2.* for so the Apostle exhorteth, *Greet one another with a kiss of charity.* 3. The richness of the converse and correspondence among the Lord's People ought not to diminish their love or hinder the expressions thereof, but rather to encrease the same; they who live together being more apt to offend, or mistake one another, and so to be mutually jealous of the affection of one another's affection, than those who are at a greater distance, whose love should provoke those that are nearer; for the Apostle, having signified the love of a kiss that was at Belshazzar's table, as their dispersed Brethren, doth here exhort them that had more frequent occasions of meeting and correspondence, to *greet one another with a kiss of charity.* 4. As it is the duty of Christ's Ministers heartily to wish all sort of true peace upon all the Members of the visible Church, who, in regard of their external profession, and participation of common gifts and benefits from Christ, may be said to be in Him, *John 15. 2.* So true spiritual peace, which is the calmness and contentment of the soul, arising from the faith of acceptance with God through Christ, when fears of His wrath, and jealousies of His love, are in some measure banished, *Rom. 12. 1.* together with as much outward peace and prosperity, as shall be for their true good, is the Lord's allowance only to real Believers, and to all of them whether weaker or stronger, and may be in a good

men are attained unto, in the midst of many troubles, to those who are plucked out of themselves, and by him planted in the living Vine, Christ Jesus: for, as this Apostolick benediction may be understood of the Apostle's wish to all the Members of the visible Church. So it doth especially respect true Believers therein; *Peace be to all them that are in Christ Jesus.* 6. As it is the duty of Christ's Ministers, to press duties upon all Professors. So it is their part to guard promises and priviledges, by qualifying the persons to whom they do belong: for the Apostle, having press the duties of love, and expressions thereof, upon all indefinitely, to whom he writeth, in the first part of this Verse, he doth in the latter part restrict his wish of *Peace*, qualifying the persons to whom it doth especially belong, *Peace be to all them that are in Christ Jesus.* 7. As the Ministers of Jesus Christ ought to enter upon every part of their Employment, with the faith of their Calling and Commission from Him: as was observed upon the first words of this Epistle; So they ought to close the same with some confidence in their hearts, of the blessing of God upon their labours, and of His granting their desires for that end: for, here the Apostle closeth his exhortations and prayers in this Epistle, with this word of confidence, *Amen.*

**A BRIEF**

# A BRIEF EXPOSITION

Of the Second Epistle General of  
PETER.

## THE ARGUMENT.

**H**is Epistle may be called the latter Will of a dying Apostle and Martyr of Jesus Christ: For when Peter wrote it, he knew that he was shortly to seal the Truth in it with his blood: as will be clear, by comparing the 14. Verse of this Chapter with Christ's prediction, concerning his death, Joh. 13. 36. It is not directed to any particular Church, but to all Believers, especially believing Jews, scattered at that time through many Nations; as appeareth, by comparing 1. Pet. 1. 1. with the first Verse of this, and of the third Chapter.

The principal heads of Doctrine contained in it, make up the scope and parts of it; And they are three. The first is, concerning a Christians growth in grace, and diligence in holy duties, which is cleared and pressed, chap. 1. The second is, concerning error; the way of working, and hazard wherof, is handled, chap. 2. The third is, concerning the last coming of Christ, some errors about it being confuted, and the right preparation for it, held forth, chap. 3.

What can be more necessary than to study growth and diligence, in so declining and secure a time as this is? to guard against error when it so prevaleth? and to prepare for the last coming of our Lord, when now it is so near, and so much forgotten?

CHAP





He parts of this Chapter are three. In the first, which is the preface to the whole Epistle, is contained a description of the Apostle, and those to whom he writeth in the Inscription, *ver. 1.* An Apostolick wish for the best blessings of God to them, to wit, the growing sense of His love, and the fruits thereof, in the Salvation, *ver. 2.* Grounds of encouragement that it should be according to his wish, to wit, that there was a saving work of grace already begun in them, which he describeth, from the cause, nature, parts, and way of working of it, *ver. 3. 4.*

In the second, which is the first principal part of the Epistle, he exhorteth to diligence, and the study of growing in grace, reckoning out several steps of their progression, *ver. 5, 6, 7.* with many moving arguments thereon, *ver. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15.* And because there is no growth but by the knowledge and use-making of Christ, and Christ is only revealed in the Word preached and written. Therefore,

In the third part of the Chapter, there is a commendation of the preaching of the Gospel, *ver. 16.* of Christ himself the chief subject thereof, *ver. 17, 18.* and of the whole written Word from the certainty and usefulness thereof, *ver. 19.* and from the divine authority thereof, *ver. 20, 21.*

Ver. 1.

Verf. 1. *Simon Peter, a servant, and an Apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us, through the righteousness of God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ.*

**T**He Apostle describeth himself, 1. from two names, which design his person. *Simon*, his old name, when he was a fishery *Peter*, his new surname, given him when Christ called him; *Mark* 1. 16. and 3. 16. The one minding him of his former ignorant and mean condition; the other, of the honour Christ put upon him, when He made him a lively stone in the Church, and a Believer, and Preacher of that Truth, upon which, as a Rock, He buildeth His Church; which is Christ's own exposition of the name *Peter*, *Mat.* 16. 18. Hence *Learn*. It is very necessary, to carry to the end of our time with us, the sensible remembrance of what we were before Christ did manifest himself to us, and of what His grace hath made us, that we may go to Heaven both humble, and thankful: Therefore the Apostle stretcheth down these two names here in the beginning of his Testimony, *Simon Peter*. Next, he describeth himself from two titles, which design his office; the one common to all the Officers of the Church, the other proper to those who had immediate Commission, and extraordinary Assistance from Christ, to publish the Gospel, and work Miracles. Hence *Learn*, 1. It is honour enough for the highest Office-bearer in the Church, to be a Servant of Christ; so doth this Apostle esteem it, who never called himself, Lord, or Head of the Church; but discharged it in all Ministers, *1 Pet.* 5. 3. and here taketh a lower title to himself, *A Servant*. 2. It is necessary for Christ's Ambassadors to know and assert their Calling from Him, that Truth may have weight with People, and they may have courage, what ever their faithfulness may cost them: for, while the Apostle knoweth himself to be a Servant of Jesus Christ, he dare avow himself by name.

and surname, even when he was calling Truths, that  
cost him his life; *Simon Peter, and an Apostle  
of Jesus Christ.* 2. He describeth these, to whom the  
Epistle is mainly directed, from the worth of their faith,  
equal to the faith of the Apostles, for all saving effects;  
and cleareth the way how they came by it, to wit, by the  
verme of the faithfulness of God, and the merits of Christ.  
*Hence Learn.* 1. The Scriptures are not only given for  
converting sinners, and working grace where it is not,  
*Psal. 19. 7.* But also for their sake who are already con-  
verted and gracious; time places being mainly intended  
for them, to further their growth, guard them against  
temptations, and to fit them for their last meeting with  
Christ; which are the ends of this Epistle, directed  
mainly to them *that have obtained precious faith.* 2. Al-  
though some Believers are more strong in believing, and  
so have more joy and peace than others, *1 Joh. 3. 23, 24.*  
Yet is the faith of them all of alike worth, in so far as it  
moueth them all to the same Saviour, from whom the  
weakest faith shall never shed; interesteth them all in the  
same spiritual promises, privileges and glorious reward;  
and is bought for them all with the same price: in all  
which respects, the true faith of the meanest Believer, is  
*all precious* with the faith of the Apostles. 3. The way  
how saving faith cometh to the Elect, and is wrought in  
their hearts, is, by verme of the faithfulness of God, who  
promised to Christ, in the Covenant of Redemption, the  
bestowing of it upon the Elect, *Psal. 110. 3.* and to the  
Church in the Covenant of Grace, *Isa. 54. 13. Joh. 6. 45.*  
It being God's righteousness to prove himself faithfull  
in making all these promises; and it comes also through  
Christ's righteousness, which is his doing and suffering  
to purchase it, and other saving graces for us; and so  
although we have it freely, Yet Christ bought it dear, and  
God is righteous in giving what Himself promised, and  
Christ paid for, *1 Joh. 1. 9.* So the Apostle maketh this  
precious faith to come to all, that have it, through the  
faithfulness of God, and our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

**Verf. 2.** *Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord.*

In this Salutation he wisheth to them a daily growth in their hearts, 1. Of the sweet sense of God's free favour, making the graces of His Spirit to thrive. 2. Of true spiritual peace, flowing from the former, and carrying with it every necessary blessing, as the signification of these words, *grace and peace*, and their order doth import; and all this, through their growing in that knowledge of God, and his Son Christ, which hath faith, affection, and practice with it. Hence *Lerna*. 1. No less than what is here wished for, is the Lord's allowance to every Believer; if they get it not, they have themselves to blame: for, His Majesty doth nothing to mar the multiplying of grace and peace upon all that have *pleased* him. 2. They that would have this rich allowance, must not only expect it in this order; *Grace*, or, God's free favour, first, and then *Peace*, with every necessary blessing; But they must study to grow daily in the knowledge of the nature and will of God, the purchase, fulnesse, and offices of Christ; so as by the use-making of all, heart and life may be changed: for, such a knowledge is this, through which *grace and peace* are multiplied. 3. It is not formalistie or vain repetition, to use frequently the same expressions to God, or to others, when they flow from new sense of the worth and need of the things: for, this Apostle, and others, do ordinarily use these same expressions in the beginnings of their Epistles, *Grace and peace, &c.*

**Verf. 3.** *According as His divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godlinesse, through the knowledge of Him that hath called us to glory and virtue.*

Followeth the ground of his confidence which may be also between them, that it shall be according to the will

to wit, That Gods power had already begun  
saving work in them, by bestowing freely upon them  
all that is essential to a gracious frame of spirit within  
and a holy life without; and this he had done by mak-  
ing them so to know Christ, as to consent to Him, cal-  
ling them by the Gospel, to glory, or eternal life, as the  
end, by *merit*, which is grace and holiness, as the way  
or means. Hence *Learn*, 1. The seen beginnings of a  
saving work of grace, are comfortable pledges and con-  
firmations to faith, that that work shall thrive, it being  
suitable to the Lords wisdom, power and constancy, to  
carry on and perfect what He hath begun: for, the  
Apostle wisheth grace and peace to be multiplied, *Ac-  
cording as His divine power had begun the work*. 2. To give  
grace to a graceless soul, is a work of Gods infinite power,  
there being so much unworthinesse, guiltinesse, and op-  
position to hinder that work in all the Elect: Therefore  
the cause of this work is here made *divine power*. 3. The  
Lord in the bestowing of saving grace, worketh both in-  
fallibly and freely; neither can any for whom it is ap-  
pointed and purchased, so oppose, as to hinder the be-  
stowing of it; for, it is *divine power* that worketh it.  
Nor can any in nature so use their naturals, as to prepare  
themselves for, or merit the bestowing of it: for, *divine  
power* worketh, by giving freely all things that pertain  
to life, and so the very preparations for the new life.  
4. The substance of every saving grace, though not the  
full measure, and a right to what may enable for how  
meeting God in practice, is given at once in conversion;  
As a Child, when it first liveth, or is new born, hath all  
the essential parts of a man: Therefore to these, to whom  
the Apostle wisheth increase of grace, and upon whom  
he is to presse growth, he affirmeth to be already *saved  
all things that pertain to life and godlinesse*. 5. The very  
first beginnings of grace is wrought in the heart, by mak-  
ing a sinner drink in the knowledge of Christ: the Law  
mildly prepares for this work, by discovering sin and  
discovered wrath, and terrifying the conscience; that the  
Gospel

Gospel, which brings us to Christ, the Saviour from sin and wrath, having in Him the fulness of grace, and a heart to let it out freely upon graceless sinners, is the Spirit's instrument of working grace: for, as the apostle wished grace to thrive, in the former Verse, through the knowledge of Christ; So here he saith, it is given at first through the knowledge of Him. 6. Then Christ is savingly known, and so saving grace wrought, when the heart consenteth to Him, calling in His Word to eternal life, by grace and holiness the way to it; They may quit their part of glory who come not to Christ while made virtuous, or gracious and holy; for, *He hath called us to glory and virtue.*

Verf. 4. *Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises; that by these you might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.*

Both the means of working, and the nature of this saving work, is here further cleared. The means are the promises of the new Covenant, containing such worthy and dear-bought blessings, as the pardon of sin, taking away the stony heart, &c. the fulfilling of which Promises to sinners, by the divine power of God, doth make them partakers, not of the infinit Blessings of God, which can neither be divided, nor communicated to any creature, but of such heavenly qualities as make them in some weak measure like their heavenly Father, and so doth free them from the disposition, passions, and desires, wherein unregenerate men live and perish. Hence learn, 1. As the Promises of the new Covenant are beyond all expression great and precious, because of the spiritual and eternal riches which they do contain; and will be therefore highly esteemed and commended by all that have faith to embrace the gift of them; So the way how the Lord worketh saving grace at first is by making us these Promises, enabling the guilty, graceless, and

...to believe and apply the same, grace and life  
...freely offered in them: for, so the Apostle ex-  
plicitly affirmeth, that by the divine power of God these  
Promises are given to us; that by them we may be  
changed. 2. The receiving of these Promises by faith  
maketh a wonderfull change upon sinners: for, so soon  
as a sinner getteth grace to believe and apply the free  
promises of the Covenant, as soon doth the Lord begin  
to make out upon his heart the things promised, so stamp-  
ing it with His own Image, that the sinner receiving  
these Promises, beginneth presently to look like God his  
Father, and in some weak measure, to resemble Him, in  
heavenly wisdom, holinesse, uprightness, and other of  
His communicable properties, especially in humilicy,  
self-denial, love and pity toward other miserable sinners,  
and for the Lords honour, and such other perfections  
as were eminent in the Man Christ; and this is the  
part of the divine nature. This change kythes also, in ab-  
horring and flying from the filthie fashions which  
flow from the unmortified corruption of these that are  
yet living in nature, and so eschewing the wrath and  
curse which such are liable to; both which may be un-  
derstood by *escaping the corruption which is in the world  
through lust*; and is here made the effect of receiving the  
Promises: and where this work is, it proveth a right to  
the Covenant, and giveth ground of confidence, that that  
work shall grow. The study of the growth whereof, the  
Apostle presseth in the next place.

Mark 4. And besides this, giving all diligence, adde to your  
faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge;  
6. And to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, pati-  
ence; and to patience, godliness;  
7. And to godliness, brotherly kindnesse, and to brotherly  
kindnesse, charity.

To the end that this living work of grace, described in  
the passage, may thrive. The Apostle doth here

exhort graciouſly to ſet in ſerious deſire upon  
the fruits of grace, or ſuch new graces in themſelves, that they  
give more than ordinary diligence, that they may be  
every grace drawn forth to exerciſe, and bring forth  
fruits; for which cauſe he ſpeaketh ſome a number of  
theſe graces, in the exerciſe whereof a Chriſtian's growth  
doth conſiſt. Hence *Learn*, 1. Even they who believe  
in themſelves a ſaving work of grace, and know the pri-  
viledges ſpoken of before, to be theirs, are not now to lie  
down idle, and ſatisfied, but to be the more active and  
diligent in the exerciſe of grace and holy duties: For ſo  
ſaith the Apoſtle, *Befides this* (that ye have precious faith  
and promiſes, and do partake of the divine nature) *Give*  
*all diligence*. 2. As it is not that ordinary diligence,  
wherewith moſt Profeſſors ſatisfie themſelves, that will  
be bleſt to make a thriving Chriſtian; but, ſuch as goeth  
through all means, and waiteth upon all opportunities  
of profiting, that their ability and calling will require  
them to follow; and gett the flower of a Chriſtian's vir-  
tue, affections, and time, which is here called, *all diligence*;  
So, a Chriſtian's end in being thus diligent, muſt not be  
his own credit before others, or the ſatisfaction of his  
conſcience only. But that the exerciſe and fruits of  
one grace may be ſtill added to another, and ſo Chriſt  
may be honoured in him, and by him; *Give all dil-*  
*igence, add to your faith, &c.* 3. Saving faith which  
gripeth Chriſt for pardon and ſtrength, and daily ſtyeth  
to Him for both, muſt be holden faſt and renewed in the  
exerciſe of it, by all that would thrive in any other grace,  
or be fit for any duty; if either we looſe the grips of faith,  
or do not frequently renew them, we can thrive in no-  
thing: therefore is faith here made the firſt ſtone in this  
ſpiritual building, to which all the reſt are to be added;  
*Add to your faith, &c.* 4. With the maintaining and re-  
newing the acts of ſaving faith a Chriſtian that would  
grow, muſt ſo mind his duty, as that he keep himſelf in  
the neareſt diſpoſition for it: for, no leſſe is required by  
Scripture, than the working habit of every grace, which



happens a Christian in such a manner, as being of sufficient age when he is called to them, either of them are loved to him, and he is in some measure ready for them; which the Scripture calleth elsewhere, the having of the heart in the right hand, *Eccl. 10. 2.* and standing with the loins girt, *Isa. 6. 14.* and here is called *Adding to Faith*.

4. There is more than this readiness of disposition for duty, requisite to make a growing Christian, even the use of holy reason to time and manage duties wisely, that as the heart heeth to duty, there may be skill to go about it with prudence and circumspection, as the word, *knowledge*, here signifieth, which is to be *added to Faith*.

5. Because there remaineth in the best many inmoderate and unruly affections and passions, which, as they are ready to exceed bounds, even about lawfull objects, so the excess of them doth darken reason, indispose the heart for duty, mar the exercise of faith, and so hinder all the former three; Therefore, a Christian that would grow, must labour to have, by the power of God's grace in him, such a command over his passions of anger, fear, grief, &c. and over his affections of love, joy, and the like, especially in the use of sensual delights, that he may be able to keep them within the bounds, which right reason, according to the Rules of God's Word, doth prescribe to them. Therefore, the Apostle exhorteth to *add to knowledge, Temperance*; which is a grace whereby a Christian's passions and affections are held under the dominion of sanctified reason.

6. Because all that walk in this way may expect trials and crosses in it. Therefore must a Christian that would grow, labour for a rational and willing submission to these, knowing, that he deserveth worse, that they may come from love, and work together for his spiritual and eternal good, upon which Scripture grounds Believers Christian-patience is built, which is here to be *added to the former*.

7. The Christian that would grow, must never conceit himself to be above the necessity of attending the external Worship and Ordinances

of Christ, but must necessarily wait upon them; not sitting upon the out-side of them, but looking especially to the right manner of going about them: for, so much doth this word, *godliness*, signifie, being distinguished from inward graces, and duties to our neighbour: as here it is. 9. A driving Christian must with his godliness make conscience of duties to his neighbour; especially, of entertaining a kindly and tender affection toward all, whom he is bound in charity to esteem Children of the same Father with himself, and kynd this affection to weak and strong, by sympathizing with them in troubles, supplying their necessities, easing their souls, and every way studying to promote their spiritual and temporal welfare according to his place and ability, which is to *add to godliness, brotherly kindness*. 10. The duties of love are not to be all confined to the Saints only. But if we would prove our selves growing Christians, we must thirst after, and endeavour the true good of the souls and bodies of all to whom our prayers or pains may be profitable, within the compass of our calling, which is to *add to brotherly kindness, charity*, a grace the exercise wherof, the Scripture presseth upon Christians in reference to all men, *Gal. 6. 10. 1 Thess. 3. 12.*

Verf. 8. *For if these things be in you, and abound, they will keep you that ye shall neither be barren, nor fruitless in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Because even those who are endued with these graces, are ready to become lazie and too contented with their measure; Therefore the Apostle to the 10. Verf. doth by many moving arguments, labour to rouse them up to diligence, and the study of growth. The first motive is from the advantage thereof, That the Christian in whom these graces are, and are in lively exercise and growth, shall never be without work, as the word here translated, *ye shall not be barren*, doth properly signifie; nor shall his work be without success, as shall manifest, for his own comfort

Gods honour & the good of others: that he doth far more by know and hath an interest in Jesus Christ, as his own Lord: Therefore the growth, and exercise of grace, is much to be studied. *Euseb Learn, 1.* The most unquestionable duties had need to be pressed upon Christians by many arguments: for, what we do most easily assent to in judgment, we are oftentimes most careless of in practice: Therefore doth the Apostle in this following part of the Chapter, multiply motives, to presse this one clear duty, That gracious persons ought to study growth in grace. *2.* Even these of whom the best in the world, may be charitable that they are gracious, ought, notwithstanding, to put themselves to the trial, both concerning the truth, and growth of their graces; Therefore, even these, who are before spoken to, as having precious faith and other graces, are here put to try, *if these things be in them, and abound.* *3.* Though the grace of sanctification be in, and from Christ, as the treasure and fountain thereof, yet it is really inherent in the Regenerate, as the subject. It is not sufficient to believe, that there is abundance of grace in Christ; but we must try, and labour to see, *if these things be in us from Christ.* *4.* It is a safe and approved way, to try the reality and growth of grace by the effects thereof, to wit, a Christian's activity in commanded duties, and his fruitfulness in his conversation, for the honour of Christ, and the good of others: for, here the Apostle putteth them to try, *if these things be in them, and abounding,* which he saith they will know by the effects of them. *They make you that ye shall neither be barren, nor unfruitful in the knowledge of Christ.* *5.* As grace may be in the habits and seeds of it, where it is not lively and growing: So it is not the being of it in us, but the liveness and growth of it that makes a Christian busie, and bear the fruits of chearful obedience to Christ's Commands, edifying and supplying others, and the like; which fruits will kyth in some measure, where grace is, and is in vigour, and will evidence the knowledge of Christ, and interest in him.

Chapter. 1. *John 1. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20. 21.*  
saith the Apostle, *if ye receive his teaching, ye shall have the life everlasting, and shall not come into condemnation, but ye shall abide in the love of the Father, which abides in you, and ye shall know the Father, who hath sent his Son to be the saviour of the world.*

Verf. 9. *But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see far off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.*

The second motive to diligence and growth in graces is taken from the hazard of the want, or decay of these graces. Those that are altogether void of saving knowledge, faith, and the rest of the graces mentioned, are utterly blind in all things spiritual, and cannot be taken up with any thing beyond this present world, and so doth declare that they undervalue that great priviledge, the forgiveness of sins, which by their Baptism and Profession they did seem, and were esteemed to have; Yet and even those, in whom these graces really are, but are under a decay and without exercise, they are so far blind in things spiritual, and intent upon things worldly, that they do, for the time, walk as if they had forgotten their pardon: Concerning both which, the Apostle's argument may be understood, and hath force to move all to diligence and the study of growth in grace. Hence Learn, 1. How sharp-sighted soever graceless souls may be in things that concern their back and belly, and this present world; Yet, till Christ make a glorious change upon them, they can see nothing of the hazard of their perishing, the worth of salvation, or their need of Christ, that they might fly to Him and give up themselves to His service, and so make preparation for death and eternity; *For he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see far off.* 2. While folks are of this temper and way, however they may be esteemed pardoned souls by themselves, and others, and dealt with by the Church as if they were such. Yet by their being wholly taken up with this present life, and making no provision for a better, do declare that they undervalue the forgiveness of sins.

when all cleare of sin, and yet he is not fit up to thankfulness and holiness, God esteemeth it forgotten. And he that walketh, as if he forgot himself to be pardoned, cannot comfortably conclude himself to be such a one, however he may be esteemed and spoken of by the best, as one that hath been purged from his old sin. 3. As sins once committed, ought still to be esteemed old, as rags that are cast off, or vomits never to be licked up again: So all that either are, or do professe, or esteem themselves to be pardoned, ought to keep the sensible remembrance of the Lord's pardoning mercy so fresh in their hearts, as they may be daily renewing their repentance for their old sins, their thankfulness for the forgiveness of them, and watchfulness against the like; the lack of which lively exercises, even in real Believers, proveth them to be much forgetful that they have been purged from their old sins.

*Verf. 10. Wherefore the rather, Brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall.*

Followeth the third and fourth motives to diligence and growth in grace. The one is, The more of these a Christian attain unto, the more shall be his cleareness and certainty that he was from eternity chosen to life, and is in time effectually called. The other is, That by this means he shall be kept from Apostasie and yeelding to temptations by the way. From the third motive, *Learn.* 1. Although the election and effectual calling of every soul tied to Christ, can be no surer than they are in themselves, *Rom. 11. 29. 2 Tim. 2. 19.* Yet may those privileges be very unsure, and unclear to the apprehension of those that are both chosen and called; Therefore they are here exhorted to make them sure. 2. As some considerable measure of the certainty of both may be attained to, even by ordinary Believers; So this jewel of Assurance shall not fall in the lap of any laxer souls, nor can



well-doing here, and hereafter, may be proposed to Believers, and looked upon by them as a motive to diligence, and growth in grace; So the only way to win to the beginning of that sweet life here, and the full possession of it hereafter, is, activity in duties, and keeping grace in lively exercise: for the Apostle doth propose sweet first-fruits to be had here, and an eternal reign in Christ's company for ever hereafter, as a motive to diligence, and the study of growth, without which neither can be expected; for, So (saith he) *an entrance shall be ministered, &c.*

*Verf. 12. Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present Truth.*

As a sixth motive, the Apostle applieth his own Doctrine, pressing growth and diligence to himself in his Calling as a Minister, That since the hazard of negligence, and the vantage of diligence was so great, as he had cleared, therefore he himself would not be negligent in his duty of stirring them up to diligence, although he supposed many of them to be both discerning and solid Christians, by reason whereof they might conceive so much pressing needlesse. Hence *Learn*, 1. While a Minister preaches duties upon People by arguments, or motives, he ought to apply these motives to himself, for his own up-stirring in the duties of his Calling; So doth the Apostle here, while he saith, *Wherefore* (to wit, because of the motives, whereby I pressed diligence upon you) *I will not be negligent.* 2. One kindly motive of a Minister's diligence and earnestnesse with People, is, the sense he hath of the hazard or benefit may come to souls, by sighting, or obeying the Truths and Duties pressed; So is it with the Apostle here, as his own hazard, and vantage stirreth him up; So his consideration of their hazard and advantage, maketh him stir them up. 3. As it is the duty and commendation of Christians, not to be

Still fluctuating and wavering in matters of opinion; or  
practice in Religion; So neither the promise of the Spi-  
rit, to bring all things to their remembrance, nor People's  
great knowledge and settledness in the Truth, doth put  
them beyond the need of the daily pains of Ministers,  
whose work is, not only to point out Believers Mistakes,  
and to inform them of what they know not, But  
to inculcate, clear, and press known Truths and Duties,  
even upon discerning and stablished Christians, whose  
imperfection in knowledge, forgetfulness, laziness, for-  
mality, and oftentimes conceit, that much pressing of  
known Truths and Duties is needlesse, doth require that  
they should be put in mind, though they know and be estab-  
lished in these things.

Verf. 13. *Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this taber-  
nacle, to stir you up, by putting you in remembrance.*

The seventh motive serveth both to stir him up to dili-  
gence in his place, and these to whom he writes, in theirs;  
and it is taken from the necessity of his so doing, and that  
both upon his part, who was bound to it by virtue of  
his Calling, as long as he had life with ability; and upon  
their part, who stood in need, not only to be minded of  
their duty, but to be powerfully roused (as the word sig-  
nifieth) to the practice of it. Hence *Learn, 1.* It is  
neither the credit nor profit of a Ministers Calling that  
should move him to painfulness, but rather the conside-  
ration of the equity of the work, how just a thing it is, as  
the Apostle's word here signifieth, that one so unworthy  
of so honourable an Employment, and manytimes justly  
deserving to have been thrust out of it, should yet be im-  
ployed, furnished, and rewarded by Jesus Christ: This  
made the Apostle, and ought to make every other Mini-  
ster, to stir up himself and others; because he thought  
it meet, or just and equitable so to do. 2. As death is the  
term-day of a Ministers service in his Calling, all which  
time he ought neither to desire to change his Office, nor



do it by Diligence under him, though he went with great  
 sweat and great hardship: So the consideration of his  
 flesh, sinning and fighting condition, improved by being  
 in a *tabernacle*, should make him stir himself busily while  
 time and strength lasteth: Therefore the Apostle counselled it  
 just as he did as long as he was in the *tabernacle* of his body:  
 still was moved to diligence, by taking up his present  
 condition: under the similitude of being in a *tabernacle*,  
 3. A Minister should not content himself barely to pro-  
 pound Truths, and munde people of their duty, but by all  
 means should labour with God, and his own heart, so  
 have such power accompanying his pains, that dead,  
 sleeping and laxe souls, may be quickened, wakened,  
 and roused up: for, no lesse doth this word signifie, which  
 the Apostle addeth to the word he used in the former  
 Verse, *so stir you up, by putting you in remembrance.*

Verf. 14. *Knowing that shortly I must put off this my taber-  
 nacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath served me.*

The eighth motive, is taken from the nearnesse of  
 the Apostle's death. Christ having told him, *Job. ar.*  
*38.* that in his old dayes he should be martyred: and  
 now knowing the time to be near, he maketh use of the  
 warning, both for his own, and their up-stirring. Hence  
 Learn, 1. The nearer our journeys end be, the faster  
 should we run: according to our strength, in serving  
 Christ, and doing good to souls: for, when death is near,  
 the best will thinke the great part of theiſſ businesse un-  
 done: Thus the Apostle is earnest with them, because he  
 knew he was shortly to put off his *tabernacle*. 2. Learn  
 from this, how hard usage, and unpleasant to flesh and  
 blood, those who are most beloved and honoured of  
 Christ, may meet with in the world, even such as this  
 Apostle met with, who after much persecution, frequent  
 scourging and imprisonment in his younger dayes, must  
 notwithstanding in old age, when natural vigour is ab-  
 sent, still such use to look for rest, fall in the hands of cruel  
 per-

Chapter 1. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 1. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 2. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 3. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 4. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 5. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 6. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 7. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 8. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 9. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 10. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 11. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 12. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 13. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 14. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 15. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 16. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 17. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 18. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 19. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 20. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 21. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 22. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 23. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 24. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 25. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 26. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 27. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 28. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 29. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 30. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 31. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 32. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 33. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 34. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 35. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 36. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 37. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 38. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 39. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 40. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 41. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 42. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 43. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 44. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 45. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 46. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 47. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 48. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 49. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 50. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 51. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 52. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 53. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 54. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 55. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 56. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 57. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 58. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 59. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 60. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 61. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 62. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 63. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 64. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 65. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 66. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 67. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 68. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 69. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 70. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 71. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 72. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 73. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 74. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 75. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 76. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 77. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 78. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 79. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 80. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 81. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 82. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 83. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 84. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 85. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 86. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 87. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 88. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 89. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 90. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 91. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 92. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 93. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 94. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 95. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 96. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 97. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 98. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 99. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.* 100. *James the servant of Jesus Christ.*

Verf. 15. *Moreover, I will endeavour that you may be able after my decease, to have these things alwayes in remembrance.*

The last motive, is taken from the Apostle's zeal for Christ's glory, in studying to propagate His Truth for the good of souls; And for that end, resolveth to take course before he died, how the Church might reap profit when he was gone; which he did, by writing Scripture, putting forth and instructing faithful Labourers, who did good after him. Hence Learn, 1. The sense of Obligation to Jesus Christ, will make His Servants and People, sincerely studious to do that while they live, that may be some way usefull for His honour and the good of others, when they are gone. And though every one cannot leave such profitable monuments as some others have done; Yet ought every Christian endeavour

leave behind them the seeds of saving knowledge, sown in the hearts of those with whom they converse, at least the lively remembrance of their humble and holy walking, the fruits of their charity and other good works, which may do as much good after their decease, as some Voluntas do: Therefore did the Apostle, not only stir them up, while he was in his tabernacle, but endeavored to propagate the Truth among them and others, after his decease. 2. As the best way of serving the generation after us, is the study of transmitting pure Truth to them; which the Apostle here resolveth upon: So, the foresight of approaching trials, doth not abate, but increase the zeal of the Lord's faithful Servants after His honour, and the good of souls; (the death of the Godly, of whatever kind it be, being a perfect outgate (as the word, *decease*, signifieth) from all sin, sorrow and fears) Therefore doth the Apostle, knowing he was shortly to be martyred, stir up himself the more to diligence.

*Verf. 16. For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses of His Majesty.*

Followeth the third part of the Chapter, containing a commendation of the preaching of the Gospel of Christ the chief subject thereof, and of the whole written Word. All which may also be taken for so many further motives, to presse what the Apostle hath been upon in the former part. 1. He commendeth his own, and the other Apostles preaching, from the excellency, and certainty of the Gospel which they preached, to wit. That their Doctrine, which held forth Christ's coming in our flesh to redeem, and His furniture for that work, was not to be looked upon, as some witty fiction, or pleasant fable, but the most certain and serious purpose under heaven, delivered by those who were eye-witnesses of God's personal presence in our flesh, and of much

much glory breaking through it, in His Miracles and Transfiguration. Hence *Lev. 1.* There is as much atheism and unbelief natural to all, as to look upon the mystrie of Salvation through Christ incarnate, as upon a fable, invented to kyth the quicknesse of mens wit, and please the ears of people; so much is imported in this negative part of the commendation of the Apostles preaching, *We have not followed cunningly devised fables.* 2. The main subject of the preaching of the Gospel, is to point out Christ's coming in our flesh, such an errand as to Redeem, and Save, and his furniture for that work, which is encouragement enough for every lost sinner that hears it, to fly to Him for salvation, since He is come to seek, and save such, and hath power to save to the utmost all that come to God through Him: for, this is here made the substance of the Apostle's preaching, *To make known the power and coming of Christ.* 3. As Jesus Christ doth not use all His Servants alike familiarly in every thing, but oftentimes those most, whom He findes to try most: So, any special honour, any of them getteth, should never be forgotten, but minded, especially when trials are near, and brought forth, only to commend Christ and His Truth, and encourage against suffering. So doth the Apostle here, near death, mention that special honour put upon him and other two, upon the Mount, and maketh it an argument to commend the Doctrine, and prove the certainty of it; *We were eye-witnesses of His Majesty.* 4. The Lord hath used all means that can be expected, to make us look upon the businesse of our Redemption and Salvation, through His Son incarnate, as the most certain and real businesse of any other: therefore, though He might have only imployed men to write the Gospel, who had never seen Christ in the flesh, and commanded us to believe, Yet hath He condescended, for our further satisfaction, to make use of such men as write the most part of the New Testament, as Iaw with their bodily eyes Christ glorious in flesh, and so *eye-witnesses of His Majesty.*

Ver. 17. For He hath sent from God the Father, saying, My  
Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

28. And the voice which came from Heaven he heard, when  
he was with them in the holy Mount.

In the next place, the Apostle commendeth Christ, as our Cautioner and Mediatour, from the high esteem He hath with the Father: 3. and from the full satisfaction the Father hath with the price of Redemption, paid by Him: of both which the Father gave a publick Declaration from His glorious residence in Heaven, before three witnesses, who were with Christ upon a Hill where He did manifest Himself to be God, glorious in holiness. Hence *Luce. 1.* The Glory of the Son of God incarnate, was so obscured for our sake, that He needed a Declaration from Heaven, to shew the Father's esteem of Him, and to begot a high esteem of Him in the hearts of His own: This is imported in Christ's receiving from the Father, honour and glory, which was not an addition of any glory to Christ, which as God He had not; but a manifestation of the glory which He had, but obscured under the veil of our infirm flesh. 2. As Glory is so excellent a thing, that they that get but a little glimpse of it, cannot but remember it, and commend it, as worthy to be contended and suffered for, as here the Apostle doth: So Christ, as our Mediatour, hath not only much Glory given Him, as the fruit of His obedience to the death for sinners, and a pledge to His Members, that they shall share of the Glory of their Head, whereof this upon the Mount, was a little fore-sight and taste, given Him for His and His Followers encouragement under suffering: But also, He is in such power and credit with God the Father, that He can do in Heaven and Earth, what He pleaseth, for the good of His Redeemed Ones; and nothing can be done without Him. All which is imported in Christ,

receiving

receiving from the Father honour and glory, by a voice from  
 that Everlasting Glory. 3. God the Father is so fully satisfi-  
 fied, and compleatly paid, by the Merciful Christ, for  
 all that He is to Him for refuge, that He seeketh no further  
 mends for all their wrongs, nor further price for what  
 they need, only that they do receive Him freely, as He is  
 freely offered; and that as the Father speaketh down  
 this of Christ, to sinners, *He is my beloved Son, in whom I*  
*am well pleased; Hear Him.* So sinners should answer back  
 again with their hearts, Christ is our beloved Redeemer,  
 in whom we are well pleased; Let the Father hear Him  
 for us. 4. It is not easie for awakened sinners, who are  
 oftentimes much unsatisfied with themselves, to believe,  
 and take comfort from this, That God is well satisfied  
 with Christ for them: Therefore, though *Isaiah* preach-  
 ed, and wrote this Truth, the Father spake it down from  
 Heaven twice before witnesses; three Evangelists have  
 recorded it, and some of them have set it down thrice,  
*Mat. 3. 17. and 12. 18. and 17. 5. Mar. 1. 11, 12*  
*Luk. 3. 22. and 9. 35.* Yet the Apostle saith it down  
 here, and to make it take impression, saith again, *This*  
*voice ye heard, when ye were with Him.* 5. It is no sin,  
 nor superfluous, to esteem, and speak of things, that can  
 have no inherent holinesse, and may have no religious  
 worship, so, as may most testify our respect to His Ho-  
 liness, who doth manifest Himself in, or by these things;  
 for which cause, the very Ground and House where He  
 manifesteth Himself, is called *Holy*, *Exod. 3. 5. 1st Cor.*  
*14. 16.* though they can have no more than a relative holi-  
 nesse: And several other things, such as the Day for His  
 Service, the written Word, &c. and here the Hill, where  
 the Lord, who is glorious in Holiness, did shew much  
 of His Glory, is called *The Holy Mount.*

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West. 19. We have also a more sure word of prophesie, where-  
unto ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth  
in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise  
in your hearts.

In the third place, the Apostle commendeth the whole  
written Word, &c. from the certainty of it. He calleth it  
*A Word of Prophesie*, giving to the whole the name of  
one principal part; most of the Old Testament being a  
fore-telling of these things concerning the Messiah and  
His Kingdom, which the New cleareth to have their  
accomplishment in Him that was born of the Virgin  
Mary; and calleth it *A more sure Word*, comparing it  
with *the Voice from Heaven*, whereof he spoke immedi-  
ately before; not as if there could be any uncertainty in the  
Lord's Voice speaking from Heaven, but because it is a  
greater matter, to have fore-seen and fore-told things to  
come, than to have seen and related the greatest things  
present: And because a transient Voice is more easily  
mistaken or forgotten, than a standing, authentick Re-  
cord; therefore, the written Word is a more sure ground  
for sinners faith to rest upon, than a Voice from Heaven  
could be. Next, he commendeth the written Word from  
the usefulness thereof, that it should prove to sinners,  
who make it the rule of their faith and manners, a com-  
fortable Directory, through this dark state of ignorance  
and misery, until they get such a measure of the promised  
Spirit, and nearness to the Son of righteousness, that they  
shall not need a prospect of Glasse, of the Word and Or-  
dinances, which will not be till death and the dawning  
of the day of eternity. Hence *Learn*, 1. The written Word,  
believed to be the Lord's mind, is the surest ground, for  
faith to rest upon, of any that ever hath been, or can be  
given to sinners, subject to forgetfulness, jealousies and  
mistakes; the general offers of Christ, and free promises  
of His grace, excluding none who will not exclude them-  
selves, have more solid encouragement to self-justifying  
sinners.

sinners, than they could have by a Voice from Heaven, calling them by their names; for, that would readily be suspected to be another than the Lord's, or spoken to another of that name: Therefore, the Apostle comparing the written Word, with the Voice from Heaven, calleth it to sinners, *A more sure Word.* 2. As this world is so dark a place, that our own reason, the counsel or example of others, will often leave us comfortlesse, to wander and fall in snares, except we look to the light of the Word, which shineth in this dark place: So they have the Lord's approbation and commendation, who do apply their hearts to, and satisfy themselves with, this Word, as the only and sufficient ground of their faith, and rule of their manners, to keep them from erring in judgment or practice; for, so saith the Apostle, *Whereunto ye do well to take heed, as to a light that shineth in a dark place.* 3. Although the light be now clear, in comparison of what was before Christ came; Yet, being compared with that light we shall have in Heaven, it is but dark; Like the light that shineth out of a room where a candle is, in a room where the candle is not seen: So much doth this similitude of *a light shining in a dark place*, import. 4. Though it be so, Yet shall the Word give comfortable direction to all that follow the light of it, under all their crosses, confusions, and difficulties, and these who make it a lamp to their feet, and a light to their path, may be sure to get at last such a clear and satisfactory sight of Christ, as shall banish all darknesse and doubts; and such a near union and fellowship with Him, the bright Morning-Star, gloriously present by His Spirit in their hearts, and personally also in humane nature, conversing with them for ever, that they shall have no more need of Word or Ordinances; which is the condition here described by the Apostle, only to be expected in Heaven, till which time we will never be above the direction of the Word and use of the Ordinances. *Eph. 4. 13. Cant. 4. 12.*



Ver. 10. *Knowing this first, that no Private of the Scrip-  
ture is of any Private Interpretation.*  
21. *For the Prophecy came not in old time by the will of man:  
but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy  
Ghost.*

Last of all the Apostle commendeth the written Word,  
from the Divine Authority of it; the Interpretation or  
true meaning whereof, cannot be found out by the will  
or proper invention of any; whereof the Apostle giveth  
a reason, Because these truly gracious men, who were  
consecrated, and set apart by the Lord, for receiving and  
registering His mind in Scriptures, could neither speak nor  
write, when, nor what things they pleased, but as they  
were immediately moved, and infallibly furnished by the  
Lord's Spirit, whose mind it is; Therefore the Scriptures  
are of Divine Authority; and this the Apostle saith, must  
be known first, to wit, as a principle of saving know-  
ledge, without which, Christians cannot profit by the  
Scriptures. Hence *Learn, 1.* As the Scriptures do not  
hold forth to us the device of their hearts who wrote in  
but the publick mind of God: So none can attain to the  
right meaning, nor be able to hold forth the true inter-  
pretation thereof, by their own proper skill, or inven-  
tion, there being in it such *secrets* (as the word *interpreta-  
tione* importeth) as cannot be loosed, but by humble  
imploping the help of the Spirit, whose mind it is, as the  
Pen-men of it themselves did, that they might know  
what was revealed to themselves, *Psa. 119. 18. Dan. 2. 26.*  
*Zech. 4. 4. 5.* and by comparing one place with another,  
*Mat. 17. 11.* and making use of other helps that God  
hath given, *Deut. 9. 2. 1 Tim. 4. 13. 18. 19.* by which  
means, through the Lord's blessing, we may come to have  
saving measure of the knowledge of Gods mind in the  
Scripture, and may have the common or publick sense of  
the Prophets and Apostles, to every saving Truth  
contained therein: for, as *Prophecy*, or, part, of

turn is of my private interpretation. - 2. As it is the duty  
of all the Lord's people, to fix in their minds, as an un-  
questionable Truth, this principle: That the Scriptures  
being the Lord's mind, none can of themselves attain to the  
true meaning of them: So, till this principle be known, at  
least so far as that it be not questioned, there can be no  
light or comfort expected from the Word: for the Apo-  
stle, having exhorted in the former Verse, to look to the  
Word for direction and comfort, doth adde here, that  
as they would find these, they must know this first, *that*  
*it is not of any private interpretation.* And though only  
the Spirit of the Lord, the Author of the Scriptures, can  
fully perswade hearts, that they are His mind: Yet, if  
men would consider, that a great many of these truths  
that are revealed in Scripture, are not only agreeable to  
Nature's-light, but may be in some measure known by  
it; The one (to wit, the light of Nature) teaching, That  
there is one God, the first cause of all, omnipotent, wise,  
righteous and good; - that it is reasonable He should be  
served, and that according to His own will, which there-  
fore He, being both wise and good, must have some way  
revealed, that reasonable creatures have immortal souls,  
and so die not as the beasts; that there is no true hap-  
piness in these things, wherein men do ordinarily seek  
it; that since vice and vertue, receive no suitable re-  
wards here, there must be punishment and reward after  
this life: all which, and many other things of this sort,  
Nature's-light teacheth, though darkly, as the Scriptures  
themselves, *Rom. 1. 19, 20.* and the Writings of those  
that never knew the Scriptures, do witness. This again,  
(to wit, the Scriptures) clearly revealing, what  
these things, pointing out the nature, will and way of  
worshipping of the true God; what that reward and  
punishment after this life, is; and the right way of  
attaining the one, and eschewing the other. And many  
other things revealed in Scripture, such as the nature  
of Christ, the way of salvation by faith in His blood,  
the resurrection of the dead, and other things.

have not been known by natural reason; Yet none of all these are contrary to such conclusions as may be drawn from principles that are naturally known, concerning the power, wisdom and goodnesse of God: And withall; if men would consider the wonderful harmony of the purpose contained in the Scripture; the likenesse of the stile thereof, though written by so many several men, living in so far distant ages, and places of the world; the exact answerableness of so many future events to their predictions in this Word; the experience of all the lovers of it; who (having no lesse use of their reason than any Atheist ever had) have found so singular a power in it, to terrifie and humble the mind of man, and then to give it true peace and comfort, and so fresh a sweetness, that the more it be studied, it delighteth the more, which no Writing in the world besides can do: The wonderful preservation of it against the malice of Satan and wicked men, who would have so hated and persecuted it, and the lovers of it, if it had been a man's device: If (I say) men, that have the use of reason, would ponder these things, they could hardly (except they were plagued with Atheism) force their hearts to contradict this Truth, which the Apostle here delivereth, *That the Scriptures are not the mind of man, but the mind of God.* And the arguments that move to the receiving of this Truth, are so much the more to be weighed, that the Apostle makes this a Truth to be known first, before Christians can get saving light, or true comfort, from the Scripture. *Knowing this first, that no Prophecie of Scripture is of any private interpretation.* 3. Although the Lord have imployed men, void of true sanctification, to prophesie some things: now set down by others, in Scripture as *His word*, *Numb. 23. & 24. chapters*, and to preach the Gospel, *Mat. 10. 4.* and so may yet imploy such men, to deliver the Word and Ordinances may be made use of for the salvation of others, as the Laws of a Nation are lawfully published by an authorized Messenger, and so may ever his personal qualifications be; yet

those men, whom the Lord employed to put His mind in the publick Register of the Scripture, though compassed with many sinful infirmities, registred by themselves, were endued with true holinesse, and in that to be imitated by all, especially those that handle the Scripture, and were infallible in that work, being consecrated and set apart by the Lord for it: Therefore doth the Apostle here call them, *Holy men of God.* 4. Although these extraordinary men did find themselves bound to wait upon the ordinary duties of God's Service, the means of their salvation, such as Reading, Prayer, Hearing, use of Sacraments, &c. even when they wanted these motions, and that assistance of the Lords Spirit which they desired, and sometimes found; as appeareth, by their fixing set times to themselves for those exercises, and at them, crying for the motions and influences of the Lord's Spirit, *Dan. 6. 10. Ps. 119. 164.* compared with *Jer. 148, 149.* and *Ps. 63. 1, 2. & 101. 2.* Yet was it otherwise with them, while they were employed in that extraordinary work of receiving and publishing the Lord's Mind, which now is the Scripture: for, they were not bound to see Visions, or to prophesie, except when they were forcibly moved, and had an extraordinary impulse and furniture so to do; in which imployment they were so infallibly born through, as that they could not erre, or miscarry: All, which is signified by this word of the Apostle's, *They spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.* Hence it followeth also, That although the Lord's Spirit be promised in the Covenant of Grace to every Believer, *Ezek. 36. 27.* and His light and assistance (which He doth not vouchsafe when we will, but as He pleaseth, *Job. 3. 8.*) is to be sought, and is necessary, in some measure, for the right performance of every duty, *Job. 15. 5.* Yet is not any ordinary Minister, or Christian, to stay from their duty till they find that measure of the Spirit, which they desire, and ought to seek after. But they are to make use of the power which they have, as reasonable servants, *Ezek. 9. 10.* and to stir up the gifts and graces they

as Christians and Believers, *Ist. Chap. 2. 1. Th. 4. 6.* and in the way of their duty, to walk, and cry for the necessary influences of the Lord's Spirit, *Gal. 4. 16.* for, the Apostle speaketh of this way of the Prophets being immediately acted by the Spirit, and their not acting as Prophets till then, as singular, and proper to them, and such as they; and therefore, not to be pretended to, or imitated by any other, except they would presume to seek out more Scripture from God, after He hath closed His Book with a curse on them that add to it, *Rev. 22. 18.* They were no ordinary men, nor acted in an ordinary way, who, according to the sense of this place, *speak as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.*

## CHAP. II.

**B**Ecause the prevailing of Error doth ordinarily bring with it a great decay of Grace and Holiness; Therefore the Apostle, (having in the first part of this Epistle, *Chap. 1.* prest the study of growth in grace and diligence in holy duties) doth in this Chapter, which is the second part, guard against the infection of error. And for this end, he doth, 1. give fore-warning of the rise and prevalency of false Teachers in the Church of the New Testament, especially such as under a pretence of liberty through Jesus Christ, would loose the reins to all licentiousness, as appeareth by comparing the 1. and 19. verses. 2. He doth at large describe them by such clear characters, taken from their abominable doctrine and vile practices, as might make them known and hateful to all the Lord's People. 3. He doth threaten them with no lesse terrible judgments than ever had come upon the vilest sinners that ever lived, that so all might be afraid to drink in their errors. And, 4. He doth hold out to the Godly some grounds of confidence, as be made use of by them, for their preservation both

both from their errors and plagues. These four are the principal parts of the Chapter: which are not handled apart, but often intermixed throughout the whole, as will appear by a particular view of the Sum thereof. The Apostle forwarneth of the rise of these soul-seducers, describing them from the strain and tendency of their doctrine, together with the hazard of it to themselves and their followers; ver. 1. from the successe they should have, ver. 2. from their way of prevailing, and certainty of their judgment, ver. 3. Which last, he confirmeth by a threefold instance of God's judgment upon the Angels, the Old World, and Sodom; intermixing therewith a twofold example of the Lord's preserving of Noah and Lot, as pledges of His respect to His own in all times of the prevailing of sin and judgment, ver. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. both which he doth apply for the comfort of the Godly, and terror of the wicked, ver. 9. especially of such soul-deceivers, and their followers, as had given themselves to the service of their lusts, wherein they were so bold and self-pleasing, that they laboured to disgrace all lawfull Authority that might oppose them, ver. 10. which sin he aggravates from the carriage of the good Angels who honour Magistracie, ver. 11. And from their likenesse to the beasts, by reason of it, in undervaluing that whereof they knew not the worth, and violent prosecuting of their lusts of pleasure, gain and glory; for which he threatneth that their end shall be worse than the beasts, ver. 12, 13, 14. And for their Apostasie from the Truth, for gain, and other idols, which they not only violently pursue than Balaam, ver. 15. when no opposition, even extraordinary, could restrain, ver. 16. and for their many fair pretences, whereby they did infect poor souls once brought from Paganism to Christianity, ver. 17. 18. 19. For all which, especially their Apostasie after a great change externally; he threatneth them and their followers, with more wrath, than if they had never known and professed as they did, ver. 20, 21. Their Apostasie he sheweth, is one to be stumbled at.

ward they still retaining their unconverted nature, are only gone back (like dogs and swine) to their seemingly renounced errors and sins, *ver. 22.*

*Verf. 1. But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.*

**T**HE Apostle bringeth in the forewarning of the rise of Hereticks, both with guarding against offence thereat, upon this ground, that it had been the lot of the Church before; and withall, describing them from this, that they should cunningly convey into the Church, and minds of people, such errors, as would bring damnation upon themselves, and all that should receive and continue in them; of which errors he giveth an instance, *That they should deny the Lord that bought them*; which is not to be understood, as if either Christ had died for such men; for then could they not have perished, *Job. 10. 11, 28.* Nor, as if they had expressly denied Christ to be the Redeemer; for then could they not have prevailed as they did with Professors of Christ, *ver. 2.* nor had their words been fained, as they are said to be, *ver. 3.* but open blasphemy. The meaning therefore is, That they being by profession, and in their own and others esteem, Redeemed Ones, should vent such errors, as would in substance tend to the denial of the Sovereignty and Lordship of Christ over His People, by labouring under a pretence of christian liberty, as it is, *ver. 19.* to loose Believers from their subjection to Christ's Royal Law; for which he threatneth speedy judgments to come upon them, as if they had expressly denied Him, after they had been redeemed by Him. Hence *Learn, 1.* It hath ordinarily been, and so will continue the lot of the Church, to be troubled with false teachers, The wise Lord so disposing, that we may have a proof of His Peoples love to Him, by their constant adherence to His opposed Truth;

13. 3. 2 Cor. 11. 16. That He may make His Truth the more clear and lovely to His own; Tit. 1. 9. That He may justly punish with strong delusion, them that receive not the Truth in love, 2 Thess. 2. 12. and that His own in no time may stumble at what hath been the lot of the Church in all times: for, to guard against offence at such a lot, and to stir up all to the study and esteem of the written Word, which the Apostle had commended in the close of the former Chapter, he thus forewarneth, *But (or, for) there were false prophets among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you.* 2. The way how seducers bring-in error into the Church and minds of people, is not easily discerned, it being often mixed with many precious Truths, ver. 19. veiled with odd and heavenly-like expressions, Rom. 16. 18. with the pretence of singular piety in the venters of it, 2 Cor. 11. 13. and of much love to the welfare of the souls they seduce, Gal. 4. 17. and born-in mainly upon the simplest sort of Professors, 2 Tim. 3. 6. By these and the like artifices, do men *privily bring in damnable heresies.* 3. Error, no lesse than the vilest practice in the world, may bring damnation upon the souls of people, especially if it be freely and voluntarily chosen, (not for terror or compulsion) as the word *heresie* signifieth, if it doe either expressly, or in substance, destroy any of Christ's Offices, or the way of salvation through Him, and if it be vented by some Professor, for the seducing of others, and renting of the Church: All which are here made ingredients of heresie, which the Apostle calleth *damnable*, and such as will bring upon them that receive, vent, and continue therein, *swift destruction.* 4. Albeit only the Elect are redeemed unto life; and none of them who are given unto Christ of the Father can perish, or finally depart from Christ unto destruction, because Christ is engaged to keep them from perdition, Job. 6. 39. Yet Reprobates, who do professe themselves to be redeemed by Christ, and are esteemed for such by the Church, may be deceived by the Lord that bought them, in the terms of



strength, when they say they have persecuted them, and in  
 the mean time in doctrine and deeds deny them, and deny  
 Him) howsoever in the terms of *historical narration* they  
 were never seduced nor written in the Book of life.  
 Even as Apostates, in the terms of *judicial process*, are said  
 to trample Christ under their feet, *Heb. 10. 29.* which  
 in the terms of *historical narration* is impossible: because  
 our Lord, was long before that time that the Apostle  
 did write this, bodily ascended into Heaven, and was  
 without the reach of any such bodily injury. And as  
 the *Amalekite* ( *2 Sam. 1. 16.* ) is charged for killing the  
 Lord's Anointed, albeit the history telleth us he was slain  
 before he came to him, because his own mouth testified  
 so much against him; So may reprobate hypocrites,  
 crept in into the Church visible (calling Christ their  
 Redeemer, and yet proving in effect bodily enemies to  
 Him) be charged for *denying the Lord that bought them*,  
 because their own mouthes and deeds do testify so much  
 against them.

*Verf. 2. And many shall follow their pernicious ways, by  
 reason of whom the way of Truth shall be evil spoken of.*

Followeth the successe of these Sectaries, held forth in  
 two branches. 1. That they should have a numerous  
 party to back them in their soul-destroying courses.  
 2. That they, and their followers, should prevail to bring  
 saving Truth in disgrace among many. *Doct. 1.* It is not  
 strange to see the most dangerous Hereticks have many  
 followers; every error being a friend to some lust, *2 Tim.*  
*4. 3.* and having often more of prosperity and applause  
 attending it than Truth, *1 Cor. 4. 8, 10.* and because of  
 the activity and fair pretences of them that vent it, *Mat.*  
*23. 15.* *Rom. 16. 18.* for these, and the like causes, *many*  
*shall follow their pernicious ways.* 2. They that are led  
 of God to the leading of the spirit of error, do not only  
 give their judgments to their sequers, But do also  
 set up themselves to back them in all the courses they  
 take.

take to propagate their errors, and increase their followers, even, although these courses, no less than their errors, be destructive to the honour of Christ and welfare of souls: for, the Apostle saith, *Many shall follow, not only their errors, which he called damnable before, but their ways, which are called pernicious.* 3. As error is received, Truth goeth out of request, the lovers thereof bending all their wit to disgrace those Truths that discover the vilenesse of their errors. *Rom. 3. 8.* and to raise and keep up hot contests among the Professors of the Gospel, *Gal. 1. 7.* thereby giving occasion to a third party, who resolve to side with none, but to slander, or (as the word is) blaspheme the whole profession of Christianity, *Rom. 2. 24* for, the Apostle here makes the slander of Truth, the consequence of embracing error, and doth point at a third party, who would take occasion from Hereticks prevailing, to slander the Truth, *By reason of whom, the way of Truth shall be evil spoken of.*

*Verf. 3. And through covetousnesse shall they with fained words make merchandise of you; whose judgment now of a long time lingreth not, and their damnation slumbreth not.*

Followeth the way how these false teachers came to have so great successe; held forth in two branches. 1. Their immoderate desire of gain and glory made them very industrious. And 2. their figurative, or, plastered language, as the word signifieth, made them easie gain a number of poor souls to be completely at their disposal, as wares are under the power of the Merchant that hath bought them; for which dealing, *Isaiah* forewarns, that God's watchfull providence was framing His deserved judgments for them. Hence *Leam. 1.* However they thus seduce souls by error, may seem to be the most malicious men in the world; *Gal. 2. 23.* and most desirous of the good of souls, *Gal. 4. 19.* Yet is the rise of all their pains with people, from some uncorrected lust, either the immoderate desire of gain or applause: for, the

of the Lord is in this to be believed, what ever they pretend, *that through covetousnesse make merchandise of His People.* 2. False teachers are in their way of dealing with soules very like unto cheating Merchants, 1. in their using of much fair and plaistred language to commend their errors; 2. In their activity and stirring from place to place (as the word in the Original, *of making merchandise*, doth signifie) to vent them; And, 3. in their unsatisfiability, their followers become their compleat slaves, both in judgment and practice. All which is held forth as clear resemblances betwixt them and cheating Merchants, in these words, *With fained words shall they make merchandise of you.* 3. However the judgment of such men be hardly believed because of their successe and fair pretences, and may be long suspended for the exercise of the Godly and punishment of those who receive not the love of the Truth, with strong delusion; Yet it is most certain, according to the foreknowledge and decree of God, it is swiftly approaching, and shall light upon them by way of surprizal; for, *their judgment now of a long time laggeth not, and their damnation slumbreth not.*

**Verf. 4.** *For, if God spared not the Angels that sinned, but cast them down to Hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment.*

The Apostle proveth the certainty of the judgment threatened against these false teachers, by a threefold instance, in this and the following Verses. The substance of the first, which is in this Verse, is, That if the holy Lord did not spare the Angels, His most glorious Creatures, when they sinned against Him, but did presently imprison them in the pit of Hell, reserving them for further judgment, These false teachers, and their followers, have no reason to dream of exemption. Which conclusion flowing from this and the following instance, the Apostle findeth not necessary to expresse, but leaveth

leaveth to their own conscience to infer. *DoB. 1.* Although it be ordinary for sinners to harden themselves against threatnings, because of their excellencies and priviledges conferred upon them by the Lord, *Rev. 18. 2.* Yet nothing of that kind can shelter them from the wrath of a provoked God; but the more of these gifts there be, and be abused, the greater measure of wrath may be expected: Therefore is the judgment of God upon these excellent and priviledged Creatures, the Angels, brought to prove the certainty of the like wrath to come upon false teachers, who by reason of their excellent endowments, and esteem in the Church, were ready to make light of the Apostle's threatnings; *If God spared not the Angels, &c. 2.* It ought to be esteemed marvelous mercy in God that He doth not presently thrust sinners down to Hell when they provoke Him, and much more that He hath provided a remedy, and offers pardon to them. Every moments sparing after the commission of sin should be thought wonderfull indulgence in God, who *spared not the Angels, but* (as the words in the Original will bear) *imprisoned them while they were sinning*, secluding them from all possibility or hopes of recovery for ever; *He spared not the Angels that sinned, but cast them down to Hell, and delivered them into chains, &c. 3.* The fallen Angels, who are the Devils, are under such a powerfull restraint of Divine Providence, that they cannot move, or act any thing, but in so far as the Lord's holy Justice and Wisdom permitteth and ordereth them, for the punishment of the wicked, or exercise of the Godly; for *they are reserved in chains of darkness*, which are nothing else but God's irresistible Power, and terrible Justice, overruling, tormenting and restraining them. 4. Although the Devils, when they are permitted, can appear visibly, as if they were at their own liberty; and can seem jovial, as if they were free of torment, *1 Sam. 28. 12.* that so they may the more effectually prevail with some peccallvers as have provoked God to give them up to their delusion; Yet, go where they will, their Hell is

straps with them, they live in the constant feeling of the wrath of the Almighty, as their being delivered is almost doubtful; such import, and in the dreadful expectation of a more high measure of wrath, which they shall get at the day of judgment, when they together with all that follow them, and follow their counsel, shall have nothing else to do but endure torment, and shall torment one another for ever: for, they are delivered in chains of darkness, as it referred unto judgment.

*Ver. 5. and spared not the old World, but saved Noah the single person, a Preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly.*

Followeth the second instance, to prove the certainty of God's judgment to come upon these soul-deceivers, because of the sum is: That if the old World, notwithstanding of their multitude and their long and great prosperity, were off, excepting a few, swept away with the flood, because of their wickedness; these false teachers, notwithstanding their multitude of followers, and long success in propagating their errors, have no reason to imagine to themselves an escape from the wrath of God: with which instance, the Apostle doth intermix the example of Noah's preservation, as a pledge of the Lord's respect to all who keep the way of Truth and Holiness: in all time, as is clear by comparing this and the 9. Verse. Although there were seven preserved from the flood beside Noah, who is therefore called the eight. Yet he only is named; because he was mainly respected in that deliverance, and the rest for his cause. He is called a Preacher of Righteousness, because even in that time he held forth to the people the way of free justification by the Righteousness of Christ, and the duties of holiness, wherein justified persons ought to walk: which, Noah hath been well acquainted, as is clear by comparing Gen. 9. 1. 7. with Gen. 8. 9. Hence it is that there are but a few names made heirs of salvation.

men prospering in their wicked courses, whereby they  
 harden themselves against the disclaimings of the Word  
 of the Lord, and put the thoughts of His wrath far away  
 from them: for after the Apostle hath by the former in-  
 stance of God's judgment upon the fallen Angels cooled  
 off the hopes of false teachers evading the wrath of God,  
 because of any pretended or real excellency they had, he  
 doth by this instance prove, that neither their multitude  
 of followers, nor former success, could avail them, since  
 God *shar'd not the old World.* 2. As the Lord useth in  
 times of greatest depopulation to profanity or error, to pre-  
 serve a few who will bear testimony for His Truth,  
 and against the dishonour done to Him by others: So  
 He is never so terrible to the wicked, but that He will re-  
 member to manifest His respect to His own few amongst  
 them, who labour to keep themselves free of and mourn  
 for these abominations which provoke Him to let forth  
 His terror: For *Neb* in this instance, and *Jer* in the  
 following, are brought in as pledges of a few whom the  
 Lord minded to preserve from that universal infection of  
 error and violence which was to prevail in the Church  
 of the New Testament, and whom He minded also to  
 deliver from the plagues to follow thereupon, as appears  
 from *Jer* 9. *But saved Neb the eighth, &c.* 3. Even  
 in the very infancy of the Church under the Old Testa-  
 ment, the way of justification by Christ's Righteous-  
 ness hath been publicly preached, and the duties of  
 holiness prest upon justified persons; the study of both  
 which ought always to be much prest upon people by  
 the Ministers of Christ especially in a time of apostasy  
 and inquiry, and approaching of judgment, as the duty  
 was to be hid from wrath, and enjoy communion with  
 God: For *Neb* in such a time was a *Prophet* of the  
 Lord, both inspired and sufficient: as was cleared in  
 the Exposition of this Verse. 4. The Lord in the ex-  
 ecution of His Justice is not bound to keep the order  
 of nature, but for the manifestation of His  
 glory, will sometimes do, make the creature

344 *... of the ...*  
... to their nature, there being in them all a stronger  
inclination so to do for their Maker's service, than to  
move according to their ordinary course in serving their  
fellow-creatures to His dishonour: for, here in this in-  
stance, the Sea cometh out of its channel at His Com-  
mand to drown a profane World; and in the following  
instance, the Fire cometh down out of its region to burn  
up filthy Cities; *Bringing in the floud upon the world of  
the ungodly.*

*Verf. 6. And turning the Cities of Sodom and Gomorra into  
ashes, condemned them with an overthrow, making them  
an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly.*

Here is the third instance, confirming the certainty of  
God's dreadful reckoning with false teachers, and their  
followers: The sum whereof, is, That if *Sodom* and *Gomorra*,  
with other flourishing Cities beside them, were  
for their wilnesse totally and terribly destroyed, and so  
made lasting Copies of Divine wrath to come upon all  
ungodly persons: these soul-deceivers who were guilty  
of as high provocations, and had drawn in their guilt  
a great number of the Lord's People, could not think  
in reason to escape. Hence *Learn*, 1. The judgments  
of God upon sinful Cities and Incorporations, use to  
be most terrible and exemplary, there being in them a  
confluence of many mercies, and so of many provoca-  
tions, powerful examples to sin, and bold despising of  
warnings, which provoketh God to make them ensam-  
ples of much wrath, *Turning the Cities of Sodom and Gomorra  
into ashes, condemned with a total and singular over-  
throw*, as the word signifieth, *making them ensamples*.  
2. The sins of reasonable creatures provoke the Lord to  
write His displeasure, not only upon the persons of the  
sinners, but also upon the sinlesse and unreasonable crea-  
tures, which they abuse to His dishonour: for, here the  
Cities, comprehending both the persons of the sinners,  
and all the plantation, store, and pleasant things of *Sodom*,  
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are burnt to ashes; and consumed with an everlasting fire.

3. However error or heresie be often looked upon with more charity, and lesse abhorrency, than profane practices; Yet shall not the judgment of Hereticks and their followers, be inferiour to the judgment of the vilest of men that ever lived; for, Gods judgment upon *Sodom*, is here brought in as an *ensample* and pledge of His wrath to come upon all the ungodly, amongst whom false teachers and their followers are mainly eyed, as is clear by considering the connexion betwixt the third Verse and this.

4. However sins and judgments, in respect of their special nature and circumstance, may vary in several times; Yet the desert of every sin, and the exactnesse of Divine Justice remaining still the same, former judgments, of what sort soever, executed upon any kind of sinners, are certain pledges of the same wrath, or the like for substance, to come upon all that walk contrary to the Truth and Will of God, though they were never so free of these special sins, that formerly did procure that wrath: Therefore is this instance of Gods judgment upon the *Sodomites* (as also the two former) brought in here, as certain pledges of Gods wrath to come upon false teachers, and their followers; yea, upon all ungodly persons, *making them ensamples* (not only to those who should be found guilty of such unnatural uncleannesse as the *Sodomites* were, but also) *to all that after should live ungodly*, whatever their particular sins should be. 5. However those that live in sin under the light of the Word, be neither willing to hear threatnings, nor to apply them to themselves, *Isa. 23. 10.* Yet is the Lords Justice against impenitent sinners so clear, in the examples thereof recorded in Scripture, and the witnessse and deputy conscience, which God hath in every mans bosom, so impartial, that if, upon serious consideration of what Gods holy Justice hath done to sinners before, it were put to speak what men, continuing in their sinful courses, have to expect now, they could not but be made to apply wrath to themselves, and certainly to expect it; while they con-



pass their own sins with those for which others have been punished: and do consider how impartially and immovably just He is with whom they, as well as others, have to do: Therefore the Apostle doth not expostulate the Infirmitie, which he clearly intendeth should be drawn from the three forenamed instances, But leaveeth it to the consciences of those whom he hath been threatening, as that which they might easily conclude from thence.

Verſ. 7. *And delivered juſt Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked:*

2. *(For ſhall righteous man dwell among them, in ſeeing and touching, vexed his righteous ſoul from day to day, with their ungodly deeds.)*

For the comfort of all that mourn for the prevailing of iniquity in thoſe among whom they live, the Apoſtle ſubjoyneth to the former inſtance, the example of *Lot's* preſervation, whom the Spirit of the Lord, that indited this Scripture, doth commend by ſeveral expreſſions of great reſpect, for it is deep reſentment of, and ſympathy with, the Lord's ſuffering honour, and for thoſe vile *Sodomites* amongst whom Providence had caſt his lot for a time. Hence Learn, 1. The deareſt of the Children of the Lord may be put by His providence to have their reſidence among the worſt of men, the Lord thereby correcting and humbling them for their too low eſteem and kindleſe making of better ſociety while they had it; of which fault it ſeems Lot was not altogether free, *Gen. 13.* and thereby alſo giving them occaſion to do good to the ſouls of ſinfull neighbours, and bear witneſſe againſt their wickedneſſe: both which, Lot accompliſhed, *Gen. 19.* 7. who for theſe and other reaſons, had his lot ſettled by ſubſtitution for a time. 2. It is not impoſſible for the Children of the Lord, living among the moſt perverſe, to retain their integrity, and ſee the Lord's approbation for their diſtinction and carriage, thoſe being ſuch great power in the grace of Chriſt, and his ſubſtitu-

ling

ling Spirit in them, than there is in the temptations of Satan, or the example of the wicked, notwithstanding all their errors and allurements: for, *Let* among the *Sodomites* is approved, and commended as a just and righteous man. 3. It is the kindly disposition of a true penitent, to be so far from taking pleasure in the sins of others, as the wicked do. *Rom. 1. 32.* that he will be vexed in soul, and will account it his duty to put himself to much grief, as the words here signify; while he doth ponder, and is a witness of His dishonour that hath forgiven him: for, so was it with penitent and pardoned *Let*, he was vexed, (which is a passive word) and *did vex*, (which is an active) *his righteous soul with the filthy conversation*, and unjust deeds of the *Sodomites*. 4. This sympathizing frame of spirit with the Lords suffering honour, is much taken notice of by Him, both to reward it graciously, and to punish them that occasion that grief to His People: Therefore both the expressions of *Lets* vexation, and of the Lord's respect to him, are frequently repeated here, *Just Let was vexed, and did vex his righteous soul*. 5. It is the privilege of a true penitent, to be in no less esteem with a merciful God, and to find no less expressions of respect from Him, than if he had never sinned against Him: for, though *Let* (not without guiltiness) did separate from *Abraham*, choosing *Sodom* to live in, for better worldly accommodation, for which he was with much oppression and soul-vexation, (both which the word in the Original doth signify) Yet the Lord did not only preserve him from *Sodoms* judgment, but He doth yet preserve his memory in esteem by these manifold expressions of His respect to him, *He delivered just Let, that righteous man, who vexed his righteous soul*. 6. When men are left of God, to follow the inclination of their corrupt nature, they will go to such a height of wickedness, as ought not to be mentioned without abhorrence: they will not be restrained by any Law, they will cast aside all modesty, and avow their villenies in their outward conversation; unnatural sins will become the very elements

wherein they will not weary to waite themselves daily : all which is signified by these words here in the Original, whereby the carriage of the Sodomites is set forth, and by the Apostle's speaking of it with so great detestation, while he saith, *Lot was vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked, and did vex his righteous soul from day to day, with their unlawful deeds.*

*Vers. 9. The Lord knoweth how to deliver the Godly out of temptations, and so reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished.*

This Verse containeth the application of all the former instances, in a conclusion drawn from them, especially for the comfort of the Godly, as also for the terror of the wicked, who ought both to draw the inference which is here from the former examples. Hence *Learn*, 1. Although there be now no ordinary warrant to expect such an extraordinary way of preservation from common calamities as some of the Saints have found before ; Yet, that same wisdom, power and love in God, which wrought deliverance for them, being engaged in the Covenant of Grace, to be forth-coming for all His own, in the way that may be most for His honour, and their good, All who imitate these Saints, in fearing threatened judgments, in mourning for, and keeping themselves free of, the causes procuring them, and in the use of commanded means for their preservation, may take their extraordinary deliverances, recorded in Scripture, for pledges to them, either of exemption from the outward calamity, if that be for their good, or of the equivalent thereof; or, rather that which will be better for them, to wit, such a measure of the Lord's presence under it as changeth the nature of it to them; or, their full deliverance both from sin and trouble by it: for, *Noah and Lot's* preservation, which were extraordinary, are here held forth as usefull for ordinary Believers, whence they might draw this comfortable conclusion,

*The*

*The Lord knoweth how to deliver the Godly out of temptation.*

2. It is the lot of the truly godly, to be brought into many and great straits, not only by outward troubles, but by inward temptations; both which come ordinarily together upon the Children of the Lord, that so their manifold corruptions may be born down, the several graces of God's Spirit in them may be tried, and increased by exercise, and the power, faithfulness, and love of Christ manifested and commended in their thorow-bearing and deliverance: for, they from whose case this inference is drawn, were in both these exercises at once; and the word, *temptation*, here, doth ordinarily in Scripture signifie both afflictions and temptations to sin.

3. While the Children of the Lord are exercised with outward afflictions and inward temptations, they are also oftentimes both ignorant of a way of deliver, and anxious concerning it, as if their straits, and the way of their out-gate, were hid from the Lord, as it is, *Isa. 40.*

27. for, this consolation, *The Lord knoweth how to deliver the Godly*, is fitted for such a case, and so doth suppose it to be ordinary.

4. The Lord's taking notice of the straits of the Godly, and His knowledge of the way of their deliverance, should be to them a sufficient ground of comfort, both against their straits and their ignorance of a way of out-gate, His love having engaged His power and faithfulness to make forth-coming for them every thing His infinit Wisdom seeth to be most for their good: for, for this very end, is this consolation given to the Godly, *The Lord knoweth how to deliver them out of temptation*, that they may be comforted both against their straits, and their ignorance of a way of deliver.

5. Whether the Lord spare wicked men, or let out the earnest of His wrath upon them in this life; yet is the full measure thereof, keeping to the fore for them, against the day of judgment, when they shall be made able to endure that wrath; a sparkle whereof, would now undo them: Therefore for their terror is this conclusion also drawn from the former examples, *The Lord knoweth*

to reserve the unjust to the day of judgment to be punished.

*Ver. 10. But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government, presumptuous are they, self-willed, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities.*

The former threatnings and examples of God's judgments, which do concern all ungodly men, are here particularly applied to some, who did in a special manner incense the wrath of God against themselves, amongst whom false teachers and their followers are mainly eyed; and who are described from this, that they follow their unmortified corruption as their ordinary leader, making a trade of sins, against the second Table, particularly the seventh and fifth Commandments thereof, wherein they were so bold and self-pleasing, that they did not fear openly to disgrace any lawful Authority that might oppose them in their wickedness. Hence *Learn, 1.* Whatever be the fair pretences of singular holiness that false teachers use to have, *1 Cor. 11. 13.* Yet really and in effect they are nothing else but profane slaves to their lusts: in so far as Truth is forsaken, and error received, profanity must needs have place, and holiness be forsaken; the same Spirit of Christ, being the Spirit of truth, and the Spirit of Holiness: for, these Seducers who drew so many after them by their fair pretences, are mainly intended here, while the Apostle saith, *They walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness.* 2. Although any one act of sin; yea, the least sinful motion of the heart, doth deserve God's everlasting wrath, *Rom. 6. 33.* Yet there is a singular measure of wrath abiding some sinners beyond others; particularly those, who are not only through infirmity overtaken in sin, as the best of the Saints have been, but do also make their corrupt inclination their ordinary guide and rule, and their following and satisfying thereof their common trade: for, the threat-

threatning formerly given out against all the ungodly, is here particularly applied to some, *those that walk after the flesh*. 3. The wrath of a holy God is in a special way incited against the sin of uncleanness, and that not only against the outward acts of that sin, such as fornication, adultery, &c. but against the very inward motions of the heart toward it; for, there is a special measure of wrath here denounced against them *who walk in the lust*, or, (as the word signifieth) *the desire of uncleanness*. 4. Lawful Magistracy is a Divine Ordinance, so precious in God's account, that He will let out a special measure of His wrath upon men, for want of inward respect to it in their hearts; yea, for any expressions that may weaken the due esteem thereof in the hearts of others, even though they were Heathens that were invested with that Office: for, though Magistrates were generally such at this time. Yet there is a special degree of wrath threatened against them, who either undervalue in their hearts, or disgrace by their expressions, that Ordinance. *Especially those who despise Government, and are not afraid to speak evil of Dignities*. 5. Men that are slaves to their own lusts, are ordinarily un-friends to lawful Magistrates; pretend what they will, they who live in rebellion against God, can never be truly loyal to any Vicegerent of His, and therefore ought not to be preferred or countenanced by such, or any that give out themselves to be such: for, they *that walk after the flesh*, do also *despise Government*. 6. The more short-hearted men are in their sinful courses, out-facing all challenges, and the more wedded to their own inclination, not fearing to disgrace any that have a calling to oppose them in their wickedness, the more wrath have they to expect from God: for, thus is the fate of these men assigned, who are here threatened with a special measure of wrath. *Presumptuous are they, self-willed*. 7. Although sedition and disloyalty to lawful Magistrates be an ordinary charge, which false teachers give in against the faithful servants of Christ, *Acts. 24. 1, 5.* and

17. 6. 7. as they did also against the Lord himself, *Luk* 23. 1. 2. Yet these false teachers themselves will be found to be the greatest unfriends of lawful Magistrates, either denying or weakning their Authority, if so be they imploy their power any way for opposing their errors, or wicked practices: for, false teachers are mainly intended here, and charged by the Spirit of the Lord with this guilt, *They despise Government, and are not afraid to speak evil of Dignities.*

*Verf. 11. Whereas Angels which are greater in power and might, bring not railing accusation against them before the Lord.*

The Apostle doth aggregate their sin of despising and disgracing lawful Authority, from the carriage of the good Angels, who, though they be far above the greatest on Earth in power and other perfections, Yet do they esteem so highly of Magistracy, that they are loth to do any thing that may disgrace, or bring in contempt, that Ordinance, in the person of any, as these base men do, whose guiltinesse and wrath must therefore be exceeding great. *Doct. 1.* The good Angels are some way present, and imployed about, the affairs of the children of men, not only within the Church, as guardians and servants to the Saints, *Psal.* 34. 7. as witnesses of their Worship, *1 Cor.* 11. 10. and condisciples with them in the study of the Gospel, *1 Pet.* 1. 12. But also without the Church, in reference to her good, executing judgement, at the Lord's command, upon her enemies, *Isa.* 37. 36. marring their counsels against her, *Dan.* 10. 20. Although they use not now visibly to appear, since the worshipping of them hath so prevailed in the Antichristian Church; Yet if they were not some way present, and imployed as is said, the carriage of these Hereticks could not be aggregated from the dissimilitude thereof, to the present carriage of the good Angels toward Magistrates, as here it is, *They despise Government, and speak evil of Dignities,*

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*Whereas Angels which are greater in power and might, bring no railing accusation against them.* 2. Although the power of Angels be finite, as themselves are, it being the Lord's incommunicable property to be Almighty, Gen. 17. 1. Yet, that power which the Lord hath given them for the safeguard of the Saints, whom they attend, Hab. 1. 14. and for the terror of the wicked, whom they oppose, Psal. 68. 17. doth far exceed the power of the greatest on Earth: for, whether they be compared with false teachers, who, by reason of the multitude of their followers, are very powerfull; or with Magistrates, who are the mightiest on Earth, they are, according to this Scripture, *greater in power and might.* 3. The more nearness any creature have to God, and the more eminent for gracious qualifications they be, the more tenderness and compassion will they bear towards creatures that are void of those perfections wherewith they are endued, and compassed with infirmities whereof they are free; and the lesse delight will they have in their disrepute, or destruction: Therefore the Angels, who do with much alacrity, and height of divine zeal, execute the judgments of the Lord when they are commanded, Psal. 103. 20. who are witnesses of more of the wickedness and sinful infirmities of Magistrates than false teachers can be, and who do far excel both in perfection, do not (as false teachers use to do) *bring any railing accusation against them before the Lord.* 4. As the eminency of sinners doth in some respects aggregate their sins, because of the power of their example, and their great engagements to God, 2 Sam. 12. 7. So also doth the meanness of their condition in other respects, Prov. 30. 21. they being thereby called to the more humble dependance and duty toward God: for, thus is the sin of these false teachers aggravated, that they, being such base and mean creatures, should despise Dominion, and speak evil of Dignities. *Whereas Angels that are greater in power and might, bring no railing accusation against them before the Lord.*



*Verf. 12. But these, as natural bruis beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things they understand not, and shall utterly perish in their own corruption.*

The Apostle, having shown how unlike these false teachers who despise Magistracy and Government among Christians, are to the most glorious creatures of God, the good Angels. He sheweth here how like they are in this, and the rest of their carriage, to the basest of the creatures, the bruis beasts: and the resemblances betwixt them which, the Apostles words may lead us unto, are especially three. 1. As the beasts are void of humane reason; so are they of heavenly wisdom. 2. As the beasts do readily trample under foot the most precious things; so do they speak evil of the things they understand not: whereby is especially meant their opposing of Magistracy and Government among Christians, and their slandering of the doctrine of holinesse, so much professed by the Apostles, as if it had been contrary to the liberty of Christians. 3. As the beasts are framed for destruction; so are they for utter perdition: which is not to be understood as if they must have immortal souls could come to nothing as the beasts, but that they are appointed for eternal torment, which they do procure to themselves, as the beast is appointed for the slaughter. Hence *Learn*, 1. However men of erroneous opinions, and vile affections, may be in so high esteem in the Church, by reason of their fair pretences and specious titles they assume to themselves, as to draw a very considerable faction therein after them; yet doth the Lord show such (and will in his own time discover them to be, what they are in effect) base and beastly in their disposition and carriage: for, here these false teachers, who pretended to be the only fountains of consolation to the Church, *ver. 17.* and patrons of christian liberty, *ver. 19.* by such fair pretences, gaining to themselves a numerous party, *ver. 2.* are declared by the Spirit of the Lord to be

be as natural bruis beasts. 2. When men are led by their sensual appetite, not by holy reason, and do become very adventurous in passing most hard sentences against things they understand least, they have then the character of a beastly disposition and carriage: for, both these are here made resemblances betwixt the beasts and false teachers, who as natural bruis beasts speak evil of the things they understand not. 3. When men do thus resemble the beasts in their disposition and carriage, it is the clearest evidence that can be, that they are appointed for destruction, as the beast is for the slaughter; and that however they may, as fed beasts, prosper for a time; yet their end shall be much worse than theirs: for, the Apostle makes the resemblance also in this, that as the beast is to be taken and destroyed, so shall they utterly perish. 4. The punishment that abideth the wicked, doth consist in a thorough and continual torment of soul and body, in the privation of all comfort, and that to all eternity, without any hope of recovery: which is imported in this, they shall utterly perish. 5. Whatever destruction cometh upon wicked men, it is of their own procuring, they do in time by their sins treasure up the wrath, and gather the fowls which shall seize upon them, and burn them up to all eternity: for, they shall utterly perish in their own destruction.

Verf. 13. And shall receive the reward of unrighteousness, as they that count it pleasure to riot in the day time: spots they are and blinnyes, sporting themselves with their own deeds, while they feast with you;

14. Having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin, beguiling unstable souls, an heart they have exercised with covetous practises: cursed children.

Here is a further amplification of the sin and judgement of these false teachers, whom the Apostle hath formerly described and threatened. The substance whereof is, That they shall want nothing of the wrath due to those

those who count it their heaven to exceed in all carnal delights, notwithstanding of the light of the Gospel, thereby disgracing their holy profession, and making but a sport of deceiving their own souls, since they can in the mean time deceive others, insinuating themselves in the esteem and society of the Godly, whether in their religious or ordinary feasts, *ver. 13.* who are so under the power of their unclean lusts, that they cannot but manifest their filthy disposition, being altogether impotent to resist temptations themselves, and ensnaring with their errors and vile practices such others as are not well settled in knowledge and grace; And who are so sold to the love of their gain, that they make it their heart-exercise to attain thereto: for all which, he pronounceth them heirs of God's fearful curse. *Deut. 1.* The wrath of God against sin had need to be oft inculcated to the guilty, and knit unto the several branches of their sin, that so they may have the more lively apprehensions of that wrath, and may have their hearts accustomed to think upon it, whensoever they think upon their sins, that so they may be either stopped in the course of their sin, and hastened to repentance, or left the more inexcusable: Therefore the Apostle, in branching out the sin of false teachers and their followers, doth so frequently intermix threatnings, or some new representation of that wrath they have to expect, *They shall utterly perish*, in the former Verse, and here, *they shall receive the reward of unrighteousness*: and they are *curst children*. 2. When God reckoneth with the wicked, they shall not want a grain weight of the wrath due to them; for, since they have slighted the use-making of Christ's righteousness, which makes sinners righteous; and the study of holiness, which proveth them righteous, *they shall receive the reward of unrighteousness*, which, in the Original, doth signifie a due proportion of wrath to their sin. 3. That which doth ripen wicked men for wrath, is not their sins only, simply considered, but mainly the several aggravations ordinarily attending their sins, whereof there may be seen here nine

in number, **As. 1.** This doth exceedingly aggravate mans sin, when they count it their very paradise to luscious their lusts; for, so the word in the Original, *They count it their Eden to riot.* The more Heaven men apprehend in their sins, the more Hell they will find. **2.** When men become so impudently bent upon their lusts, that neither the light of the worlds knowledge of their sin, nor the light of the Word discovering the evil and hazard thereof, doth restrain them; both which may be comprehended in this other aggravation of their sin, *They count it pleasure to riot in the day time.* **3.** When men by their sins, do stain a holy profession that they have made before the world: for, if these men had not had a fair profession and high esteem in the Church, they could not have been *spots and blemishes while they feasted with the Lords people;* which is here made another aggravation of their guilt. **4.** When men do not only live in sin, but do make a sport of it, beguiling their own hearts with groundlesse apprehensions that there is neither such evil nor hazard therein, as the Word holdeth forth, and their own conscience sometimes suggesteth: for, this is another aggravation, *They sport themselves in their own deceivings.* **5.** When in the mean time of their living in the slavery of their lusts, they are carefull to keep up their esteem with the Godly, and attend all occasions of converse with them, that so they may cloak their sins: for, it is here made another aggravation of their guilt, that all this wickednesse is committed *while they feast with the Lords People.* **6.** When mens lusts are so vigorous within, that they manifest their predominancy in their very outward carriage: for this is a further aggravation of their sin, *They have eyes full of adultery.* **7.** When men become so impotent to resist their lusts, that the satisfying thereof becometh their very element, out of which they cannot rest, as the word here signifieth, *They cannot cease from sin:* which is also another aggravation of their guilt. **8.** When sinners become infectious, and insinuating, with the bait (as the word, *beguiling,* in the Original signifies)

their pleasures, many others, to swallow down their  
 foul errors and profane practices: this also is a high ag-  
 gravation of their guilt. 3. When men make it their  
 heart-exercise, whereabout they spend their wit and  
 affections to fulfill their fleshly desires: for, this is here  
 the last aggravation of their sin. *An heart they have exer-*  
*cised with covetous practices.* Doct. 4. Although it be  
 possible that the Lord's People may without guiltiness  
 admit into their ordinary and intimate society, the worst  
 of men, while they do not discover themselves, as is clear  
 concerning *Abimelech* and *Judas*; Yet doth the admis-  
 sion of such into their society oftentimes prove a great  
 snare, especially to those that are admitted, while they  
 take occasion therefrom to harden themselves in those  
 sins, and to count the less of that vileness, the commis-  
 sion whereof doth not mar their esteem and society with  
 the Godly: for, this is one thing that helped these soul-  
 deceivers to deceive themselves and willingly to over-  
 look the evil of their own condition, that notwithstanding  
 of all their wickedness, they were admitted to the so-  
 ciety of the Godly, and did passe among them for such;  
*While they feast with you.* 5. When men labour not to  
 mortifie their inward lusts, the Lord oftentimes doth  
 justly suffer them to manifest the predominancy of these  
 lusts over them in their outward carriage; As grace  
 which is lively within, will put some beauty upon the  
 outward man, *Eccles. 3. 1.* So corruptions vigorous with-  
 in will readily bewray the person to be his slave, *Isa. 3. 9.*  
*Blazing eyes full of adultery,* or (as it is in the Original)  
*of the adulteress.* 6. So bewitching is the spirit of error  
 where it entereth, and to devoted are deluded souls un-  
 to their seducing teachers, That though these teachers be  
 judicially plagued of God (as ordinarily such are) with  
 profanity of life; Yet this doth not make their followers  
 leave them, or abhor their errors: for, though they  
*delude to the day now,* and *had eyes full of adultery.* Yet  
 were they still beguiling unstable souls. 7. Those who are  
 not assisted in knowledge by clear information and fre-

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quent meditation of the Truth, and have not their hearts established with Grace by the frequent exercise thereof, will readily be a prey to soul-deceivers: for these whom they beguile are here called *Unstable souls*. 8. No man doth serve one idol alone, but many at once: he that is wedded to worldly pleasures, will be also to his credit; the want whereof, doth mar his pleasure; and if pleasure and credit be two of a mans idols, readily gain will be the third, that so he may the more easily attain to the other two. Therefore doth the Apostle describe these men here as slaves to all these three idols at once, to their *pleasures*, which were their *Idol*; to their *credit*, which made them hold forth baits to take many followers; and to their *gain*, wherewith their heart was exercised, that in their pleasures and credit might be attained and upheld. Lastly, They who, professing themselves to be the Children of the Lord, do spend their immortal spirits upon the unworthy things of this present life, not trusting to his care and providence in the moderate use of lawfull means wherewith their profession doth oblige them. They do forfeit their right they pretend to have to the Privileges of His Children, and serve themselves hein to His curse: for, because their heart is exercised with *worldly practices*, they are *curst children*.

Ver. 15. *Which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Beor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness:*

16. *But was rebuked for his iniquity; the dumb ass speaking with mans voice, forbade the madness of the prophet.*

The Apostle, having shown what idols these false teachers did set up, he sheweth here two wooll effects that their love to them, especially to their gain had upon them. The first, is, their apostasie from the Truth and way of Christ. The second, is, extreme violence in the persecution of true idols; Which last he saith forth by comparing them with Balaam, who was so mad in the prosecution

fession of these same idols, that even extraordinary opposition could not restrain him. Hence *Learn*, 1. How ever men that really enter the way of Christ can never totally or finally fall from it, by reason of the Lord's undertaking, *Job*. 10. 28. and unchangeablenesse, *Rom*. 11. 29. Yet they who have been once in opinion sound, and in external practice blamelesse, remaining in the mean time without any inward saving change, may make apostasie from both: for, such had these men been, of whom the Apostle saith, *They have forsaken the right way*. 2. Love to some unmortified lust, especially covetousnesse, is the prime cause both of much apostasie, and of extreame violence in sinful courses: for, so was it with these false teachers and their followers, their heart was exercised with covetous practices in the former Verse, and therefore *they forsook the right way*, imitating *Balaam* in the violent prosecution of that idol. 3. When the right way, which is the way of truth and holinesse, is forsaken, men can keep no certain course, but must needs be like wandering stars or planets (as the word here signifieth) ever seeking, and never finding, that true satisfaction they might have had, and have forsaken, by forsaking the right way; *And are gone astray*. 4. When the Lord's ordinary means, to reclaim sinners from their lusts, doth not prevail with them, the Lord is justly provoked to give them up to go on in their own way, over the belly of more than ordinary opposition, if they have it, till they perish: for, *Balaam* was not restrained by means more ordinary in his time, and therefore he is not reclaimed by means more extraordinary; *He loved the wages of unrighteousnesse, though he was rebuked for his iniquity by the dumb asse*. 5. Covetousnesse being once rooted in the heart, and proposed as a man's main end, it is so powerful and imperious an idol, that it will make the covetous man adventure upon any course, though never so unrighteous, and go over never so much opposition in the way of his gain: for, though the wages that *Balaam* desired, were wages of unrighteousnesse, because they

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could not be had but by cursing the People whom God had blest; Yet he loved them, and pursued them, though the dumb asse forbad his madnesse in so doing. 6. The more opposition from the word, or dispensations of God, men do go over in the prosecution of their lusts, the greater is their guilt, and the more wrath have they to expect from God, especially when they trace the steps of sinners, whom God hath by His Word and Providence opposed before them: for, it is here made an aggravation of sin, and cause of a special measure of wrath, that these men followed the way of Balaam, who would go on after his lusts, though the dumb asse, speaking with mans voice, forbad his madnesse. 7. It is in some respect more easie to work the greatest miracle in nature, than to stop the course of a sinner, violently pursuing his lusts; the reasonlesse creatures, who have no active opposition in them to their Maker's will, being more prone to obey Him, contrary to their ordinary course, than reasonable creatures, without special grace and assistance, can be, either to follow the direction of His Word, or their own reason contrary to their corrupt and vile affections: for, while Balaam goeth on in his sinful course, The dumb asse, speaking as if it had a mans voice, forbad his madnesse. 8. A crosse providence meeting sinners in a course contrary to the revealed Will of the Lord, hath a language to them, proclaiming their madnesse, and prohibiting them to go on in their sins, which they ought to hear and obey, although it be not so expresse, as when one man reproves another; See *Mica. 6. 9.* for, though we read not, (*Numb. 22.*) that Balaam's asse did either expressly call him mad, or prohibit his course; Yet here the Spirit of God putteth that commentary upon what it spake, which also Balaam should have done, *That the dumb asse speaking with mans voice, forbad the madnesse of the prophet.* 9. It is the height of madnesse to walk contrary to the revealed Will of God, how much use of reason forever men may have to cover their wickednesse, and attain to their idols: for, though much carnal reason and policy



did appear in Balaam's way. Yet the dumb ass forsook the  
*man* of the prophet. 10. A man who is mad in the  
 pursuit of his lusts, and so incorrigible, hath even extra-  
 ordinary means do not reclaim him, may, notwith-  
 standing, be employed by the Lord for revealing of His  
 Will to His People, and for the edifying of His Church;  
 and in the discharge of that employment may be fur-  
 nished with much heavenly matter, and suitable expres-  
 sions, and ought to be heard and obeyed by the Church  
 in the discharge of his employment, while he is not dis-  
 covered to be what he is, and is not according to the or-  
 der established in the House of God put from that im-  
 ployment: for, such a man was Balaam, whom the Lord  
 did employ, and by whom He did deliver most com-  
 fortable and edifying Truths to His Church: all which  
 is clear by comparing this place of Scripture, with *Numb.*  
 24, 22, chapters.

*Verf. 17. These are wells without water, clouds that are car-  
 ried with a tempest, to whom the mist of darknesse is  
 reserved for ever.*

In this, and the two following Verses, the Apostle  
 holdeth forth several of those means, which false teachers  
 make use of for attaining their foretamed idols, especial-  
 ly their gain and applause. The first, which is in this verf.  
 is their fair promises of doing much good to the Church:  
 They give out themselves to be wel-springs of comfort to  
 the Lord's People, and clouds to drop down their doctrine  
 as rain, to make the Church fruitful, whereas in effect  
 they did but disappoint poor souls, and darken the Truth;  
 for which, the Apostle threatneth them with everlasting  
 darknesse, as their portion. Hence Learn, 1. They that  
 do most hurt to the souls of the Lord's People, by venting  
 most dangerous errors among them, make oftentimes the  
 fairest promises of doing most good to them, that so they  
 may feed People with vain expectations of more than  
 ever they can find from them; faithful Ministers, being  
 sensible

sensible of their own insufficiency, 2 Cor. 3. 5. and of the necessity of a divinit concurrence with their pains, 1 Cor. 3. 7. are more ready to expresse their fears of Peoples disappointment, 2 Cor. 11. 2, 3. than to make such large promises of much comfort and profit to People by their means, as false teachers use to do: for here, these seducers give out themselves to be what faithfull Ministers ought to be, *Wells* of consolation, receiving from Christ the Fountain, and giving out to His People what may comfort them; and *Clouds*, to stop down their doctrine as rain in season, to make them fruitful. 2. Whatever be the fair pretences and promises of false teachers, the Lords People can meet with nothing but disappointment from them; and whatever esteem they may have among the best for a time, God will take His own time to manifest what they are in effect; and to undeceive His own People: for here they that gave out themselves and were esteemed to be the chief instruments of the comfort and fruitfulness of the Church, as the similitudes of Wells and Clouds, whereby they set out themselves, do import, are here discovered to be such as did disappoint, and in disappointing, increase the anxiety of those that expected comfort from them, as *Wells without water* do the weary traveller; and so be such as are acted by the restless spirit of Satan into every airt where their fore-named idols of gain and applause can be had, as *clouds that are carried with a tempest*. 3. The judgment of false teachers, whereof their followers shall get a share, shall be very proportionable to their sin; for they promise to be Wells of consolation to the Lords People, and do disappoint them; they themselves delight to walk, and to lead others in the works of darkness, they darken the Truth of God; and in this course they are restless, as *clouds carried with a tempest*: and therefore the threatening is exactly suited to these sins; For them the *mist of darkness is reserved for ever*.

Verf. 18. For when they speak great swelling words of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonnesse, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error.

Here is the next course which soul-deceivers take to ensnare poor souls by their errors, to wit, a high and lofty stile of language, which their love to their lusts made them to affect, and whereby they were very taking with unmortified wanton professors, especially such as have been turned from Paganism, to the profession of Christianity. Hence *Learn*, 1. They that vent error do ordinarily hold it forth under some lofty strain of language, and high-bended expressions, beyond what is ordinary, such as may be most taking with, and admired by the hearers; whereas faithfull Ministers can trust Christ, to make plain Truth, spoken in the simplicity of words, effectual for the salvation, comfort and edification of His own, which is their main scope. 1 Cor. 2. 4. for, it is here a character of false teachers, *They speak great swelling words*. 2. When the vail of odd and soaring expressions, wherein false teachers delight, is laid aside, and the naked purpose, held forth under them, is considered, it will be found of no worth, but either some untruth, or that which maketh nothing to the true advantage of souls; both which are vanity: for here their *great swelling words*, are *words of vanity*. 3. An affected lofty stile of language in uttering things divine, doth ordinarily flow from some unmortified lust in the speaker, especially the love of applause; and is also mainly taking with wanton unhumbed souls, when it doth provoke to more vanity and lightnesse, by diverting them from the study of their natural vilenesse, their need of Jesus, and the necessity of the mortification of their heart-evils: for, they who speak great swelling words of vanity, *they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonnesse*: both which last clauses may be understood, as well of the principle

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principle which doth bend the preacher to that strain, as of the qualification of these hearers with whom it is most taking. 4. There may be a very remarkable external change from vile and blasphemous opinions, idolatrous and profane practices, to a profession of Truth and substantialness of the outward conversation to it, where there is no saving or inward change made of the heart, from the love of secret lusts to the love of Christ and His grace; the one without the other may be occasioned by the power of example, the majesty and clearness of Truth, which is in nothing contrary to nature's light, the beauty of holiness shining in the conversation of Professors, and outward advantages which sometimes may attend the profession of Truth and Holiness: for these here who were yet given to *the lusts of their flesh, and much wantonness* had once clean escaped from the blasphemous opinions, profane and idolatrous practices of those without the Church, who are here called *them that live in error*. 5. Whatever change of this sort be wrought upon men unless they labour to find the power of Christ's Spirit changing their nature, and mortifying their inward lusts, they will easily be a prey to seducing spirits, and carried to those sins which are no less dishonourable to God, and destructive to their own souls, than those wherein they lived before: for here, those who had once clean escaped from the vile opinions, and wicked practices wherein Pagans live, are now by the seduction of false teachers, turned profane and licentious Christians.

Verf. 19. *While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for, of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage.*

The last of those means whereby false teachers do snare so many of their hearers, is, their pretending to make clear to them, and possess them in, that Christian liberty, whereof the Gospel speaketh, which they could

not at all persons, in regard themselves were compleat  
slaves to their lusts, as captives in war are servants to  
their conqueror. Hence *Learn*, 1. The Doctrine of  
Christian liberty, which is in it self most sweet and sa-  
ving, holding forth our freedom from the Law as a  
Covenant of works, *Rom.* 7. 4. and from the curse thereof  
of *Gal.* 3. 13. from the dominion of Satan, *Heb.* 2. 14, 15.  
the terror and allurements of the world, *Gal.* 1. 4. and  
the dominion of our own lusts, *Rom.* 6. 14. hath been,  
and yet is, much abused, while it is stretched to give li-  
berty to sin, and to loose Christians from the holy Com-  
mandments of the moral Law, as they are now prest by  
the Gospel: for, so doth the Apostle forewarn it should  
be abused along the time of the Gospel, as is clear by  
comparing this with the 1. and 21. Verses. 2. They  
that are much in crying up Christian liberty, and little or  
nothing in pressing the holy Commandments of Christ  
upon His Redeemed Ones, the obedience whereof is a  
great part of our Christian liberty, and one main end of  
our liberation from our spiritual enemies, *Luke* 1. 74,  
75. they cannot but be slaves to their lusts; and so must  
those be that embrace that doctrine: for, while they pro-  
mise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of cor-  
ruption. 3. Although every man be bound in Law to  
be the servant of Christ, who can make the worst thing  
that men can do subservient to His ends, *Psal.* 119. 91.  
Yet he who doth voluntarily, and ordinarily, give up  
himself to serve the Devil, and his own corruption, with-  
out resistance or crying to Christ for help, is then in a  
manner, a lawful captive to Satan, to be detained by him  
till the Supreme Judge execute deserved wrath upon  
him, as one that rendereth himself to a conqueror, is his  
bondslave, according to the Law of Nations, to which  
the Apostle alludeth while he saith, *Of whom a man is  
overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage.*

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*Ver. 20. For, if, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world, through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again intangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning.*  
*21. For, it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy Commandment delivered unto them.*

The Apostle proveth the condition of these Apostates, whom he supposeth to have attained so much of the knowledge of Christ, as had power upon them to cleanse their outside, to be much worse than it was before that change, because their sin and judgment had been less, if they had never known any thing of the way of justification revealed in the Gospel, than it will be now, after that hath been cleared to their understanding; and yet in doctrine and practice they do cast off another part of the Gospel, to wit, that which presseth the duties of holiness upon justified persons. Hence *Learn*, 1. Even those who are destitute of the saving knowledge of Christ, and strangers to the mortification of heart-pollutions, may find so much power of the knowledge of Him, as to make them cleanse their external conversation; the knowledge of Christ is so ravishing a subject, able to divert even an unrenewed mind from many sinful speculations, that even a hypocrite, living in love with his secret lusts, may escape the pollutions that are breaking forth in the world, through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. 2. They who have not attained to a heart-outcast with sin, and some inward mortification thereof, will, upon fit occasions and temptations, be readily enslaved again, and made slaves to those same sins which were externally reformed, and from the outward acts whereof only, they had made an escape: for these here spoken of, having only escaped the pollutions that are in the world, through the knowledge of Christ, they are again intangled and overcome.

3. Before men be overcome by temptation, they are first enticed with the apprehension of some pleasure, profit, or the like, to be had by their sins; with which apprehension the hazard and danger of committing the sin is covered and hid, as the fishers hook is by the bait, which is the metaphor in the Apostle's expression, *They are again intangled and overcome.* 4. The guilt and deserved wrath against those who after illumination by the truth, and external renunciation of their sins, do return back again to them, is much greater, than if they had never been so far enlightened and reformed, their sins being now against light, and some taste of sweetnesse, which is sometimes letten out even to those who do but externally renounce their sins, and betake themselves to the way of Christ, *Heb. 6. 4, &c.* for, of such the Spirit of God saith here, *The latter end is worse with them than the beginning.* 5. Those to whom the Lord doth make known the way of free justification by the righteousness of Christ, to them also He doth deliver His holy Commandments, the obedience whereof they ought to set about in His strength: for, so much is imported in the Apostle's words, that having *known the way of righteousness*, there was *a holy Commandment delivered to them.* 6. It is lesse difficult, and more ordinary for men, to adhere in their opinion and profession, to the way of free justification by Christ's imputed righteousness, when that way is once cleared to their minds, than it is for them to insist in the constant practice of holy duties, which Christ presseth upon them, and offereth them strength for, there being even in corrupt nature, which is most averse from holy duties, some inclination to be made blessed, and that freely; which is imported in the Apostle's changing of the expression: for, he doth not say, that after they had known the way of righteousness, they had turned from it; importing, that these false teachers did still professe and preach justification by His righteousness; but, *after they had known that way, they turned from the holy Commandment delivered to them; their* adhering

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adhering to the one without the other, made their guilt greater than if they had never known that one, and no lesse than if they had turned from both.

Verf. 22. *But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again, and the sow that was washed, to her wallowing in the mire;*

In the last place, the Apostle guardeth against any offence which might be occasioned by the apostasie of these false teachers and their followers, in regard they had now proven themselves never to have been inwardly renewed, as the true sheep of Christ are; but only by their Baptism and profession to have externally renounced that vilenesse, whereunto they are now returned again, after the custom of dogs and swine, according to that common proverb, which is made use of in Scripture, *Prov. 26. 11. Doct. 1.* Sin ought to be represented by the Lord's Ministers in its abominable vilenesse, especially when men labour to palliate their filthy practices with fair pretences. Therefore these vile practices, which these false teachers called their christian liberty, the Apostle here calleth *a licking up of their vomit, and a wallowing in the mire.* 2. They who after external reformation and great profession of holinesse, do return unto, and continue in, their renounced sins, do thereby give evidence that they were never inwardly or really changed in their nature: for these, of whom the Apostle speaketh here, being still dogs and swine, were only washen externally, and did vomit up by confession and seeming renunciation, their filthy practices, to which they did return again, *as the dog returneth to his vomit, and the sow that was washed, to her wallowing in the mire;* and so this place can make nothing for the apostasie of the Saints. Lastly, It is lawfull for the Ministers of Christ to make use of common similitudes, or proverbs, to clear the Truth, and fix it in the minds of those that are led by sense, (providing they do make use, especially of such



as are scriptural) propose all their similitudes in a decent and cleanly way, suitable to the majesty and purity of Truth, and apposit to their present purpose; and bring them forth only for illustration of Truths, otherwise proven: for, so doth the Apostle here make use of such a similitude as he found in Scripture; which, though it be taken from things in themselves vile, is express in the most honest terms, that can fitly set out the vileness of apostasie, the evil whereof he had clearly proven before; *It is happened unto them according to the true proverb, etc.*

### CHAP. III.

**B**ECAUSE the believing consideration of Christs second coming, is a special mean to make Christians thrive in grace and holiness, and to guard their hearts against temptations; Therefore the Apostle, having pressed growth in grace and holiness, in the first part of this Epistle, Chap. 1. and guarded against the infection of error, in the second part, Chap. 2. He doth in this last Chapter, wherein is the third part of the Epistle, 1. defend and clear the doctrine of the last judgment; and 2. doth shew what use Believers should make thereof.

In the first part of this Chapter, the Apostle, having put them in mind of his main scope in both the Epistles, which was to keep the substance of the Gospel fresh in their minds, ver. 1, 2. giveth forewarning of the rise of profane mockers of Christs second coming; who, that they might serve their lusts with the more quietness, would plead for an eternity of this present world, because they had never observed any appearance of such a change as was foretold to be at that day, ver. 3, 4. Which blasphemous opinion, together with their seeming reason for it, the Apostle confuted by several reasons drawn from the works of Creation and Providence, which

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which prove there will be such a day, as will be very terrible to profane mockers of it, ver. 5, 6, 7. and holdeth forth to the Godly, satisfying reasons of the delay of that day, to wit, that it is very small, being compared with eternity, ver. 8. that the delay is mainly for the gathering of the Elect, ver. 9. which being done, that day will come suddenly and with much terror, ver. 10.

In the second part of the Chapter, the Apostle maketh use of his former Doctrine concerning Christ's second coming, for the up-stirring of the Lord's People to the study of holiness, ver. 11. to wait and pray for that day, ver. 12. when they had ground to look for so excellent an estate, ver. 13. as might provoke them to much diligence in making ready for it, ver. 14. to esteem the delay thereof to be granted for the furtherance of their salvation, in which strain Paul had insisted much in his Epistles, ver. 15, 16. And upon the consideration of all, to labour for steadfastness and progress in grace, and in the knowledge of Christ who is worthy of eternal praise, ver. 17, 18.

**Ver. 1.** *This second Epistle (Beloved) I now write unto you, in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance:*

2. *That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy Prophets, and of the Commandment of us the Apostles of the Lord and Saviour.*

**T**He Apostle doth here present to them his chief scope intended by him in both the Epistles, which was the wakening and rousing of these sincere-hearted Christians, to whom he writeth, to an actual consideration, and constant practice of known Truths, that had been delivered to them by the Prophets, himself, and other Apostles of Jesus Christ. Hence *Learn, 1.* The Ministers of Christ ought not only to intend, as their scope, some particular advantage to the souls of the Lord's People by all the Messagery they carry to them; But also in their delivery

delivery of them, frequently to make clear to the People what their main intent is, that so themselves may be engaged to direct all they deliver toward that scope, the People may have it the better fixed in their minds, and all that they hear, relating to that scope, may be the better understood, and have the greater weight; otherwise the greatest variety of Truth, and most taking expressions, can have but a slender and soon evanishing impression upon that hearer, who cannot be able to condescend upon the principal scope of the speaker: for, here the Apostle hath proposed their up-stirring as his scope, and by his frequent mentioning of it in the first Chapter, and this also, did ty himself to speak to it, and made his hearers able to judge how all he delivered did make for it; *Thus second Epistle (Beloved) I now write unto you, in both which I stir up your pure minds.* 2. A Minister's main scope, ought not to be the acquiting of himself before men in his duty, so as he may be free of censure, neither only the clear information of the minds of the Lord's People in the Truth, neither yet the bringing forth of some new things which they that live under the Gospel have not formerly heard, But more principally he must study the quickning and wakening of the affections of the Lord's People to a delight in, and resolution to walk in the practice of Truths they have formerly known and remembered: for, it is here the Apostle's scope, *to stir them up*, a word frequently used in the New Testament of raising the dead, and wakening those that are asleep, by putting them in remembrance, which signifieth to represent of new to the mind and memory truths formerly known and remembered. 3. A Minister that would prevail with the Lord's People, ought both to keep love to them, that his pains may flow therefrom, and in his dealing with them to expresse his love and high esteem of any measure of sincerity he hath discerned in them: Therefore doth the Apostle stile these whom he intends to stir up, *Beloved*, and doth acknowledge that they had *sincere and pure minds*. 4. Even those who for sincerity of heart,

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and honesty of their aims and intentions, may aside the trial of Gospel-light, have great need of many messages to the same purpose, and of much up-stirring to the right use-making of them, there being in them that have the clearest understanding, much darknesse, and many mistakes concerning the Truths of God; and in the sincerest Believer, whose heart is most lively and forward in duties, a great remnant of hypocrisie, deadnesse and unwillingnesse to the practice of many known duties: for, the Apostle findeth it necessary to write two Epistles *for the up-stirring of pure minds*, or, as the word in the Original signifieth, minds so sincere that they may be judged by the Sun. 5. The Word of the Lord hath most weight with People, when not only they that carry it to them, are holy, and so esteemed by the People, but the minds of the hearers are carried above the Messengers to Jesus Christ, and their hearts in hearing or reading, are filled with some sense of His Sovereignty who doth employ those Messengers, and of His usefulness for them in all His Offices: Therefore, that the Word which the Apostle here exhorteth them to study, may have the more weight, he leadeth them not only to look upon the Messengers that carried it, as holy men; but to consider the sovereignty, excellency, and usefulness of Christ in His Offices to which He is anointed; *Be mindful of the Words which were spoken by the holy Prophets, and of the Commandments of us the Apostles of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.* 6. The way to keep life in the affections of the Lord's People, is to have their wit and memory actually exercised about the Truths of God, both the Prophecies and Promises of good to the Church and People of God, and to presse the Precepts enjoyning their duty: for, that the Apostle may gain his principal scope, to wit, the rousing up of their affections, he maketh this his speech subordinate thereto, *That they might be mindful of the Words that were spoken before by the holy Prophets, and of the Commandments of the Apostles of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.* 7. Although the Lord

might letten forth His mind to His Church, by little and little, in several Ages of the World, and by several Mouths, Heb. 1. 1. Yet is there such a compact harmony among all the parts of His Mind, that all serve for one and the same principal scope, the up-stirring of the Lord's People to a hearty receiving and use-making of Christ and His Truth: for, unto this scope the Apostle here affirmeth, that the whole Doctrine both of the Prophets and Apostles did harmoniously tend.

Verb. 3. *Knowing this first, that these shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, And saying, Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the Creation.*

That the Apostle may attain his fore-mentioned scope, he doth forewarn of the rise of profane mockers, toward the end of time, who, that they might sin the more securely, should question the second coming of Christ, and plead for an eternity of this present World, pretending this reason for it, That since the whole frame of Nature had kept one constant tenour and course since the death of Adam, Seth, Noah, and the rest of the first fathers, it was not to them credible that ever there should be such a change as was foretold to be at the day of judgment. *Doct. 1.* Variety of very fierce and discouraging opposition in the way of Christ, and that from several sorts of enemies; is the let wherewith the Church and People of Christ may resolve to be exercised: for the Apostle, having forewarned of and guarded against, open persecution in the former Epistle, saith; and fair pretending Heretics in the former Chapter, he doth here forewarn of, and guard against, a third sort, to wit, profane scoffers of Christ's second coming. 2. The consideration of the hazard that the best are in of being drawn aside, some one way or other, from the Truth and Way of Christ, by such variety of opposition as they ordinarily

oathly meet with ought both to stir up Ministers earnestly to warn and guard People against the same; and People so the use-making of their pains: for, after the Apostle had guarded against open persecutors and cunning deceivers, he doth here bring in the forewarning of the third sort of enemies, *scorners*: which may be taken both for a reason of his pains in writing two Epistles, as also for a reason why they should be stirred up by what he had written. *Knowing this*, that besides furious persecutors, and subtil deceivers, they should also be exercised with profane *scorners*. They who have not been terrified by the first sort, nor deceived by the second, are in hazard to be discouraged by the third. 3. The certainty and necessity of being exercised with variety of opposition in the Way of Christ, is one of the principles of Christianity which ought to be held in the first place by all that resolve to adhere to any other saving Truth; they who do not first know this, and notwithstanding thereof, resolve upon adherence to the Truth in Christ's strength, will readily, when they meet with such a lot, be surprised therewith, and either forsake the Truth, or faint in their adherence to it: Therefore the Apostle would have them *knowing this first* that after several other sorts of enemies, there were also *to come in the last dayes, scoffers*. 4. There are no such pure or peaceable times to be expected by the Church and People of God within time, wherein the fore-mentioned lot is not to be expected; they who dream of the best times to the Church on Earth, look for them toward the end of time: and yet the Spirit of God here forwarneth, that beside the rage of persecutors and prevailing of hereticks, *there shall come in the last dayes scoffers*. 5. It is a clear evidence that men are slaves to their lusts, when they do strongly desire an eternall enjoyment, of this present world, and labour to banish out of their own hearts the thoughts of a day of judgement: Yea, their so doing is also the cause why they give up themselves to the service of their lusts, the believing consideration of the

error

error of that day to the wicked, being a special help to mortification and of the sweetness thereof to the Godly, a special encouragement in the battel against corruption: for their *stopping at the promise of Christ's second coming*, may be looked upon here both as the evidence and cause of their *walking after their ungodly lusts*. 6. When men are left of God to vile opinions for not receiving the Truth in love, they are then oftentimes plagued further, not only with devilish wit, to find out seeming reasons for the defence of them, very plausible to themselves, and others like themselves; but also to take manifest falsehoods for undeniable grounds of their errors: for, these mockers here lay all the weight of their blasphemous opinion upon this seeming reason, That *since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were, &c.* which appeareth from the Apostle's contrary instance, ver. 6. to be a manifest falsehood. 7. Although it be a sweet mercy, much to be acknowledged by the Lord's People, that things in nature do ordinarily keep one constant course, and that they are not terrified with the frequent change thereof, but may be thereby confirmed in the faith of the Lords constancy and faithfulness, as David was, *Psal. 119. 90, 91.* Yet men that are in love with their lusts, do make a wofull use of the consideration thereof, hardening themselves in their conceit that there shall never be a change, that so they may sin the more securely: for, thus did these scoffers abuse this mercy, taking occasion therefrom to question the promise of Christ's second coming, and to walk the more boldly after their ungodly lusts; *since all things continue as they were from the beginning of the Creation.*

Verf. 5. For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the Word of God the Heavens were of old, and the Earth standing out of the Water, and in the Water.

6. Whereby the World that then was, being overflowed with Water, perished.

7. But the Heavens and the Earth which are now, by the same Word

Word we take in these, as a confirmation of our judgment, and a warning of ungodly men.

Because these mockers did pretend reason for their blasphemous opinion, the Apostle taketh pains to confute it by several reasons, such as they did not love to understand. The first, taken from the work of Creation, is, That the whole fabrick of the Heavens was set up by a Word of God's. The second, taken from an ordinary and daily work of Providence, is, That the Earth, being the lowest and heaviest of the Elements, is by His Word kept from being overflowed by the Waters that go about it, and cover it in many places, ver. 5. The third, taken from an extraordinary work of Providence, is, That by a Word of His, letting out the Waters to their natural course, the whole Earth was once overflowed in the time of the flood, ver. 6. The conclusion drawn from these three, is, That this Word is a sufficient ground for us to believe that He shall come again to judgment, and that this whole frame of Nature is keeping to the fore as if it were to burn up all the ungodly, especially profane mockers of that day, ver. 7. *Silence Lesson, 1.* When vile blasphemies are not only boldly vented but maintained with some shew of reason, to make them taking with people, they ought then to be solidly confuted, and born down with strength of reason, grounded upon the Scripture. Though otherwise, when they are only simply or rashly asserted, and are not taking with hearts, it is sufficient to reject them with detestation, and expressions of our abhorrence of them: for, because this blasphemy had a seeming reason to back it with, the Apostle taketh pains to confute it by many solid reasons, drawn from the Scriptures. 1. They that are in love with their lusts and errors, they love also to be ignorant of these truths, the knowledge whereof might disquiet them in following their lusts, and maintaining their errors; Yea, they would willingly be ignorant of what they do know, that so they might sin the more securely: for, these men



here, whom the faith of a day of judgment could not but terrifie, are discovered to be *willfully ignorant* of these things that might have helped them to believe it. 3. As the whole frame of Nature had its being, and hath its subsistence by the Word of God; So the believing consideration of this, is sufficient to make the most unlikely thing that God hath promised, to be credible to us. They who look right upon what God hath already done by a Word, will never think any thing He hath promised or foretold, impossible: for, the Apostle giveth this as a sufficient confutation of their blasphemous mockery at the promised appearance of Christ; That since by the Word of the Lord the Heavens were of old, and the Earth standing out of the Water, and in the Water, it is not incredible that all shall be taken down with as little difficulty as it was at first set up, and hath hitherto been upheld: which is the force of the Apostle's reasoning here. 4. It is a standing miracle of Nature that the Earth is not overflowed by the Water, while one part of it is covered therewith, and another not, whereof, though some probable natural reasons may be given, Yet all will not satisfie, till we look to God's Decree of Providence, and His executing thereof by His Word, by which the Earth is standing out of the Water, and in the Water. 5. However error, when it is looked upon alone, as the cunning craftinesse of men usually representeth it, may seem to have a kind of likelihood and probability, Yet when it is compared with the clear light of the Truth shining upon it, it doth manifestly appear to be a lying deceit: for, that plausible assertion, *All things continue as they were from the beginning*, ver. 4. wherewith these scoffers laboured to weaken the faith of a day of judgment, is clearly discovered to be a manifest lie, by this contrary instance, ver. 6. *The World that then* (to wit, before the flood) *was, being overflowed with Water, perished.* 6. Particular judgments upon some wicked men, while others are spared, do prove that there shall be a general judgment: for, seeing some are justly punished here, and others

Chap. 3. *second Epistle General of Peter.*

others, deserving no less, are spared, He who is immeasurably and impartially just, must have a day for judging these afterward, who are spared in time: Therefore doth the Apostle bring in the instance of the flood upon the ungodly World, not only as a contradiction to their assertion, *ver. 4.* but as a proof against them of a day of judgment; *The World being overflowed with Water, perished.* 7. The day of Christ's second coming will be a most dreadfull and terrible day to all ungodly men, who banish the thoughts of it, and desire eternally to possess this present World, and the pleasures thereof; when they shall see all those creatures, which they have abused to serve them in their serving of their lusts, burning fewel, to kindle (as it were) that flame, which shall burn them up for ever and ever, and shall not be so happy as to be destroyed with the rest of the creatures, but shall then enter into their never-ending torment: for, *the Heavens and the Earth which are now, are kept in store, reserved unto Fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.*

*Ver. 8. But (Beloved) be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.*

The Apostle having, by strength of reason drawn from Scripture, overthrown the opinion of these mockers of Christ's second coming, He doth in this, and the two following Verses, hold forth three reasons which may satisfie the Godly, concerning the delay thereof: The first, which is in this Verse, is, That the delay ought not to be judged of according to our sense or apprehension, but according to the duration of God, with whom that space of time which seemeth very long to us, is but as one day, and to whom all those differences of duration, which to the creatures are longer or shorter, are all alike, and alwayes constantly present. *Deut. 1.* There is so great affinity betwixt the hearts of the Godly, who are but in

past sinners, and the worst temptations to the greatest indiscretions or errors, especially such as pertain to the lusts of corrupt Nature; that when they are boldly vented with presence of reason, there is great hazard that there be some impression left upon their hearts, inclining them to the same: Therefore, for the preventing or removing of this, the Apostle which pains to subdue the Godly, concerning the causes of the delay of Christ's coming, which had not been needfull except they had either received, or had been in hazard to receive some bad impression from the bold assertion and scolding reason of these mockers. 2. Although it hath pleased the Lord to condescend so far to our shallow capacity, as to set forth to us in Scripture, and to give us leave to take up, His duration in our own terms, while He calleth Himself, Yesterday, and so day, and for ever, Heb. 13. 8. Which was, and is, and is to come, Rev. 1. 4. The Ancient of days, Dan. 7. 9. Whose years have no end; Psa. 102. 17. Yet all these differences of time, which ours are longer or shorter, are all alike to Him, whose duration admitts of no beginning, succession or ending, but consisteth in a constant perpetuall of all that which seemeth to us past, or to come: for, one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. 3. The Servants of Christ ought to have a far different esteem of those who mock at the Truth of God, and scoffingly state their errors contrary to it; and of those who through infirmity may have some inclination toward error, and therefore stand in need to be guarded against it; and accordingly their carriage ought to be different toward the one and the other: for, of the one the Apostle spoke in the former words, with indignation and contempt, as they deserved, calling them scoffers, walking after their own gaily lusts; but so the other he spaketh thus with love and kindness, O ye Beloved, be diligent not to let your labours be in vain. 4. There are some things revealed in Scripture concerning the time which must be understood by faith, as the Apostle's expression is, Heb. 11. 2. although they cannot be comprehended

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headed by us to the satisfaction of our shallow reason: for here, the Apostle would not have them ignorant of this one thing. *That one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day;* which is a Truth that none with in time can well comprehend, only faith can assure us and make use of it, in judging as he judgeth, that many years delay to us of the performance of a promise, is but a very little time, being compared with eternity, only it may foster a holy longing to be with Him, when we shall partake of His duration as well as of His glory, when there shall not be such a thing as any sad reflections upon by-past sweetness, or any painful languor for sweetness to come, but a constant present possession thereof; our duration resembling His, with whom *one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.*

Verf. 9. *The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, (as some men count slackness) but is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.*

The second ground, for satisfaction of the Godly concerning the delay of Christ's second coming, is, That that delay doth not proceed from any such thing in God, (whatevers men may judge) as usually maketh men slow in performing their promises, but only from His patience toward His Elect, whose temper requireth time and pains for working grace in them, that they may be fitted for glory. Hence *Learn*, 1. We ought not to frame our thoughts of God as one man useth to do of another, especially when we think of the delay of performance of promises, as if that delay did flow from want of foresight of possible difficulties, weakness, forgetfulness, or fickleness, whence delay among men doth ordinarily flow; all such thoughts of Him, as our hearts are very apt to entertain, *Psal.* 90. 21. we ought to remove far from us, and to persuade our selves of the contrary, that He is most mindful of His Promises, *Psal.* 111. 5. and to apply

in performing of them, that He will not stay a moment after He hath wrought what is necessary before the performance, *Mal. 4. 2.* for, such negatives as this here concerning God, do in Scripture both import an aptnesse in us to imagine the contrary affirmative of Him, and likewise that the contrary of what is denied, is, in a superlative degree, His property; *The Lord is not slack concerning His Promise, as some men count slackness.* 2. The true and satisfying reason of the delay of the second coming of Christ, is the Lord's long-suffering toward His own Elect, who must be dealt with in order to their conversion, in a way suitable to their temper, which requireth time and pains to work upon each elect soul come into the world, and to the years of discretion, by commands, threatnings, promises and alluring motives, every one of these being multiplied after another, and by these same means every elect brought to that measure of grace, which God hath determined to work in the converted, that they may be fitted for glory: for, this is here given as the satisfying reason of the delay of Christ's second coming, that the Lord is *long-suffering to us-ward.* 3. The Lord doth not soon nor easily gain His point even with His own Elect, but after many refusals of His renewed offers, and slighting of His pains, His patient and powerfull love doth at last overcome all opposition in them, and so bringeth them to repentance: for, before they are brought to it, *He is long-suffering to us-ward.* 4. The Lord cannot fall short of His intention toward any upon whom He doth take pains, nor doth His good-will to save, reach to any sinners, but those whom He doth really make partakers of Salvation: for, the Apostle saith here, *He is long-suffering to us-ward,* that is, to us Believers, and others, elected as we are, not as yet born, or not as yet converted, not willing that any such should perish, but that all of that kind should come to repentance; So that the Scripture *All*, is not alwayes to be understood of all and every individual person in the world, but oftentimes it is put (here comprehended in *us*) for all the

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the Elect only, as is clear by comparing, *Jer. 31. 29.* with *Joh. 6. 45.* and this present Scripture. 5. Although the Lord do only intend the salvation of His Elect by His long-suffering and pains, Yet He is pleased to expresse His desire of their salvation, in the largest terms that can be, that so He may the more effectually prevail with His own, and render the rest the more inexcusable, who, except they will exclude themselves, are not excluded by such large expressions of the grace of God as are here, *He is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.* 6. All those whom the Lord mindeth to save in an ordinary way, are first brought by Him to a sensible sight of sin and deserved wrath, and to such apprehensions of mercy in God for them through Jesus Christ, as maketh them turn in to Him, grieving for, and forsaking their sins, and giving up themselves to His service: for, *those whom He willeth not to perish, He willeth and maketh to come to repentance.*

Verf. 10. *But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in the which the Heavens shall passe away with a great noise, and the Elements shall melt with fervent heat, and the Earth also and the works that are therein shall be burnt up.*

The third thing whereby the Apostle laboureth to satisfie the Godly anent the delay of the day of judgment, is, That that day will be very unexpected and terrible to secure sinners, as the coming of a thief in the night used to be to a sleeping family; and that there will be then a great change and dissolution of the whole frame of Nature, and of all things wherein most men place their happinesse; the inference from which, not being exprest, but to be collected from the Apostle's scope, is, That it is the wisdom of the Lord's People rather to prepare for that day, than to complain of the delay, or to be anxious concerning it. *Doct. 1.* Similitudes made use of in Scripture, do not justify the actions of men, whence these

misdeeds are taken, only they do much connecte to us the Lord's second coming, and desire to have our taking up His mind, while He disposes Himself for our capacity to compare His most just and holy actions, to those actions among men which are most abominable and hateful to Him. Therefore is the suddenness and terror of Christ's second coming, set forth here by the coming of a thief in the night, which practice though it be in itself sinfull and condemned by the Lord, Yet it is made use of by Him, because the terror and suddenesse of it is so well known to men, that they may by it the better conceive the manner of Christ's second coming; *But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night.* 2. Christ's coming at the last day will be a great surprisall to the most part of the children of men, who will not be wakened out of their security by the Word, to make preparation for it. As for these fore-going signs of that day, which the Scripture speaketh of, such as the destruction of Antichrist, the conversion of the Jews, and that great alteration of the whole course of Nature; some of them may be done in so little time, and so immediately before that day, and others of them so little taken notice of, or believed, as signs of that day, that notwithstanding of them all, the most part shall be surprized with it, as with the coming of a thief in the night. 3. That day of judgment will be a most terrible day to all who do not expect and prepare for it: There will be a strange sight, and a dreadful noise, when this great Workmanship being on fire, shall all rust down, and all the delights of wicked men shall be burnt up before their eyes. The Lord thereby testifying His displeasure against mens placing their happiness in these things, and their defiling of them, by making them subservient to their lusts, mean time signifying His purpose to give a more cleanly and glorious Mansion to His own to dwell in; *In that day the Heavens shall passe away with a great noise, and the Elements shall melt with fervent heat, the Earth also and the Works that are therein shall be burnt up.* As for questions which may be asked

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here, it is much more safe for us to give time and pains that we may be found of Him in person at that day, than to be taken up in enquiring and determining whether the visible Heavens, and the Earth, and the rest of the creatures of that kind, shall then be totally and for ever annihilated; or, whether there shall be a new edition of them all, or of some of them only, to be lasting monuments of the power and glory of the Maker, and to ravishing objects of the Saints delight, who may through that new world follow the Lamb where ever He goeth.

*Vers. 11. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness?*

In this second part of the Chapter, are contained three several uses, which the Apostle draweth from his former Doctrine concerning the last judgment, and they are especially six: The first, which is in this Verse, is, That the consideration of that day should make all the Lord's People very inquisitive how they may be more and more forth-coming for His honour, in the discharge of all the duties of holiness, especially those whereby He may be glorified in their conversation. Hence Learn, 1. The Ministers of Christ ought not to facifie themselves to draw the Lord's People to a naked contemplation of the Truth, which Hypocrites, yea Devils, may attain unto. *Jam. 2. 19.* But they ought to draw every Truth they propound to them, to some practical use for the promoting of holiness in the hearts and lives of their hearers, without which, peoples condemnation will be greater, than if they had not heard or known these Truths. *2 Pet. 3. 21.* Therefore the Apostle doth not think it enough to have defended by reason the second coming of Christ, and to tell them of strange events to fall forth at that day. But doth here, and to the end of the Chapter, apply all to them for their use; *Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be.* 2. The



2. The whole creation is now in a manner imprisoned, and in bondage, while they are abused contrary to their inclination, to the service of mens lusts, and dishonour of their Maker; from which slavery they shall be loosed at Christs coming, *Rom. 8. 21.* for, the word in the original here is used to signify the loosing of a captive, or prisoner, out of his bonds, *Act. 22. 30.* *These things shall be dissolved.*

3. The consideration of this dissolution of the creatures, should make these of the Lord's People that are furthest promoted in holiness, very inquisitive after, and still aspiring toward a further degree of holiness, than what they have formerly attained; knowing that the greater degree of holiness they attain unto, the more comfort shall they have now, and the more glory when Christ cometh: for, the Apostle putteth this question to his own heart, and the hearts of all the Lord's People, *What manner of persons ought ye to be, &c?*

4. That holiness which should be aimed at by the Lord's People, and which will be comfortable to them, and approven of God, now and hereafter, must be manifested in all the parts of their conversation, both in their outward carriage, and secret practice, in their common affairs and religious performances, in duties of Gods immediate Worship, and in duties relating to their neighbour, as is imported in this, *What manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness?*

5. In the discharge of all the duties of holiness, Christians ought to look much to the qualification of their persons, that they be reconciled with God through Christ, and daily renewing the friendship, by the exercise of godly sorrow for sin, and a living faith in the Mediator, and by keeping their hearts in frame for the particular duties of holiness they are called to: for, the Apostle doth not put the question, how holy ought our conversation to be? but, *What manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness?*

6. If the holiest on earth would put their conscience to speak to them, after serious consideration of the terror and glory of the second coming of Christ, they would be much un-

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satisfied with their present measure of holiness, and would have their desires quickned, and their endeavours strengthened after a further measure thereof, as is imported in this question of the Apostles, put to his own, and others conscience, *What manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness?* including himself, ver. 13.

Verf. 12. *Looking for and hastning unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the Heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the Elements shall melt with fervent heat.*

The second use of the former doctrine, is, That the consideration of so dreadfull and glorious a day, should make all the Lord's People live in the constant expectation thereof, by their prayers and pains furthering these works which must be done before it come: which use, together with the former, the Apostle beareth in by a new representation of the glory and terror of that day. Hence Learn, 1. To live in the constant expectation of Christ's glorious appearance, is both the duty of all the lovers of Him, and a special mean to make them grow in holiness: Therefore is this expectation preft here by a word of the present time, importing that it is both a perpetual duty in it self, and a special mean of attaining to what is preft before; *What manner of persons ought ye to be, &c. looking for the coming of the day of God.* 2. Although the time of Christ's second coming be so fixed in the decree of God, as that it cannot be altered, *Act. 17. 31.* Yet ought the Lords People to be no lesse earnest in hastning their own preparation for it, and by their prayers, and oher means competent to them in their stations, furthering these great works to be done before, than if that day could be hastned by them: for, the word in the Original signifieth, not only our hastning toward that day, but also our hastning of it; See *Isa. 16. 5. Looking for and hastning the coming of the day of God.* 3. It is safe for the Lords Ministers frequently to represent to His People those Truths, that are much contradicted by enemies

de Trinitate, that are but such considered by His People, and which have greatest influence upon their practice, to restrain them from sin, and provoke them to duty: for such is this Truth concerning the end and mystery of the last day, which the Apostle, having spoken of before, repeats here again; *Wherein the Heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the Elements shall melt with fervent heat.*

*Verf. 12. Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new Heavens and a new Earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.*

Here is the third use of the former doctrine, and it is for the consolation of Believers, against all their pains and sufferings in Christ's service, and especially against the loss that they may apprehend to be in the fore-mentioned dissolution of all things; They have a more excellent state to look for, a new World, when the old is dissolved, where only righteousness shall have its constant abode. This promise of the new Heavens and the new Earth, was first given out to the Church by *Isa. 65. 17.* and *66. 22.* and had some accomplishment, as these places make clear, at the return from *Babylon*, which was a new World: the ruined and exiled State and Church of the *Jews*. It is also made use of by the Apostle *Paul*, as having spiritual mercies in it, such as conversion, regeneration, and the like, which is as a new World to sinners: for, he maketh it to have accomplishment this way, *2 Cor. 5. 17.* And yet this Apostle here leadeth Believers to expect more out of that same promise, not any worldly or temporal felicity, as Millenaries dream, because it is a state promised after the day of judgment, as fully satisfactory to Believers, where no sin, but only righteousness, shall have its constant mansion; which cannot agree to any earthly happiness, but must be understood of everlasting blessedness, set forth under these borrowed expressions. *Psalm. 1.* One and the same promise may contain several sorts of mercies, both temporal and

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and spiritual, to be letted out of several times in the  
People; and yet may have its full accomplishment only  
in Heaven: for, such is this promise of new Heavens  
and a new Earth, out of which *Wald* hath drawn an im-  
portant deliverance. Paul spiritual mercies, and *Peter* does  
everlasting blessedness. Many promises in Scripture are  
of the same nature, e. g. That promise, *Isa. 25. 8. The*  
*Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces,* with in  
part accomplished when the mourning Church come  
rejoycing home from their exile in *Babylon*, as is clear,  
*Psal. 126.* That same promise hath also been often made  
good, in the Lord's comforting of particular persons,  
humbly mourning for their sins, as appeared by *Psal.*  
*126. 8.* And yet that promise is not yet its full accom-  
plishment in Heaven, as is clearly *Rev. 21. 4.* The con-  
sideration whereof may serve to direct us to a right use-  
making of many promises. 2. The state of Believers  
in the other life, will be wholly new, their bodies will be  
new like Christ's glorious Body, *Philip. 3. 21.* their spi-  
rituals new, *1 Joh. 3. 2.* their duration new, a constant  
professing of enjoying the Lord, *1 Thess. 4. 17.* Their  
exercises shall be new, singing new songs to the Lamb,  
*Rev. 5. 9.* and to follow Him where ever He goes, *Rev.*  
*21. 3.* Their cloathing shall be new, glory and immor-  
tality, *1 Cor. 15. 52.* New food and refreshment, to eat  
of the Tree of life, and drink of the Water of life, *Rev.*  
*22. 1, 2.* and a new light and sun to shine upon the new  
glory of God and of the Lamb being the light of that  
new World, *Rev. 21. 23.* All which are but borrowed  
expressions, to set forth the glory of that Estate, which  
cannot be fully set forth: for, even the Apostle, not ha-  
ving time nor ability to reckon out all the particulars of  
that new and blessed Estate, senteth it out by a new  
World, which comprehendeth many new things in it,  
*Wald* for *the new Heaven and a new Earth.* 3. In this new  
World, there shall neither be sin, nor temptation to sin;  
there shall be no wrong, nor oppression, nor affliction,  
which are the consequences of sin; there shall neither

ther be any change, nor any possibility or fear of change for, righteousness, which often falleth in the straits now, and cannot get enterance, but is banished out of the most parts of this World, *Isa. 59. 14.* shall have a constant mansion there, as the word here signifieth, *Where righteousness dwelleth.* 4. They that would have a well-grounded confidence of attaining to this better World, must take hold of it in the promises thereof in Scripture, which ordinarily contain both the qualification and duty of the person that may expect it, as is clear by comparing *2 Cor. 5. 17. Job. 3. 16. 1 Job. 3. 3.* with this present Text, *We, according to His promise, look for new Heavens and a new Earth.* 5. They who have laid sure hold upon eternal life by faith in the promises thereof, will not be shaken out of their confident expectation of it, either by profane mens scoffing at the ground of their confidence, or by the sight of never so strange events falling forth before they possesse what they believe for, the Apostle, having foretold Believers that they should hear much bold mockery of the last judgement, and a better life than this, and that they should see all this World on fire before they did possesse that better, expelleth here what should be their hope and language notwithstanding of both; *Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new Heavens and a new Earth.*

*Verf. 14. Wherefore (Beloved) seeing that ye look for such things, be diligens that ye may be found of Him in peace, without spot, and blamelesse.*

From the consideration of that comfortable state that Believers have to look for beyond time, the Apostle exhorteth them to serious and constant diligence in making use of the Bloud and Spirit of Christ for the doing away of their sinful spots, as the only way wherein they may expect true peace when Christ cometh, which is in substance the same with the first use of his former doctrine *ver. 11. Hence Learn, 1. The lively hope and expectation*

tion of everlasting blessedness, should be so far from making them that have it negligent and remiss in holy duties, that it should be a special motive and engagement to the same, that so they may honour Him who hath made sure for them that heavenly inheritance after time, and alloweth them the comfortable expectation of it in time : for, this exhortation to Believers, is inferred upon their confidence, *Wherefore (Beloved) seeing ye look for such things, be diligent, &c.* 2. They who have an approved and well-grounded confidence of Heaven, are so subject to laziness in their duty, and thereby in hazard to lose or weaken their assurance, which is only maintained in the way of diligence, *2 Pet. 1. 10, 11.* that they have much need to be frequently roused up by the word of exhortation, to diligence in their duty : for, it is those whose confidence of Heaven the Apostle questioneth not, but supposeth to be well-grounded, whom he doth here (as often before) exhort to *give diligence.* 3. It is not unlawful for the Lord's People to look upon the excellency of the reward which free-grace hath prepared for them, and thereby to provoke their own hearts to diligence in their duty : Though the reward be neither the main, nor the only motive of a Christian to his duty, Yet it is one that may warrantably be made use of, as here the Apostle doth. *Wherefore (Beloved) seeing ye look for such things, (to wit, the new Heavens and the new Earth, spoken of in the former verse) be diligent.* 4. The main thing whereabout Christians diligence ought to be exercised, is, The washing away of the spots of their bypast guiltiness, by the frequent application of the Blood of Christ, and the changing of their polluted natures, whereby they are inclined to defile themselves further, by the virtue of the Spirit of Christ; both which may be comprehended in this, *without spot, and blameless,* which is here holden forth as the object of Christians constant and serious diligence. 5. Although there be now many spots, and much to blame in the best, who may, so long as they are in time, cry, *Unclean, unclean;* Yet there

who expect to be seriously diligent (as the word here signifies) in employing of Christ for pardon of by-past guiltiness, and for strength in the battle against sin for time to come, shall be found by Him when He cometh without spot, and blameless. 6. Much sweet peace and quietness when Christ cometh, whether at death or judgment, will be found in the spirits of those who make it their serious work in time, to have their daily guiltiness washed away by the application of the Blood of Jesus, and their filthy natures changed by the power of His Spirit; and, on the contrary, much fearful unquietness, and bitter anxiety will be at that time in their hearts who carry their unpardoned guilt, and unrenewed natures, to their end with them, without any serious diligence for removal of either: for, the words in the Original are, *That ye being without spot, and blameless, may be found by Him in peace*; importing that these, and none but these, will have peace when He cometh. 7. The thoughts of that peace which diligent Believers will have at Christ's coming, and of that unquietness which will be then in the hearts of others, ought to provoke all that love their own peace, to much diligence, in making use of Christ for pardon of sin, and victory over it: for, the Apostle maketh this an alluring motive to diligence, that such, and none else, shall be found in peace, without spot, and blameless.

Verf. 15. *And account that the long-suffering of our Lord is salvation, even as our beloved brother Paul also, according to the wisdom given unto him, hath written unto you.*

The fourth use of the former doctrine, both as to the delay of Christ's second coming, and the manner of it, is, for upstirring of the Lord's People seriously to pursue what work the Lord is about while His second coming is to be delayed, to wit, the working and procuring of living grace in His own, and fitting of them for that eternal salvation which He is to bring with Him.

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for which work, time and pains are necessary: and thus use the Apostle beareth in upon them, as a thing that had been much pressed from the same ground: upon these same *Hebrews*, by the Apostle *Paul*, of whom he speaketh with much love and respect, as a man dear to him, and faithfull according to his talents. Hence *Lev. 8*. The way to quick our hearts under the delay of the performance of promises, is, to have them much exercised with the consideration of that work which the Lord is about during the delay: how much it serveth for the advancement of our spiritual and eternal welfare: for, this way would the Apostle have the Lord's People to lay their reckoning, that every dayes sparing of the world is given to them for making fast work of their peace with God, and firing of them for glory, that so their hearts might be quickened under the delay, *And account that the long-suffering of the Lord is salvation.* 2. These Truths which have been often, and by several of the Lords Ministers, harmoniously pressed upon the Lords people, ought to have a special weight with them, as being afflicted by many wickednesses, to be the mind of God, more fully cleared, and offered with a new relish, from several hands: for, by this the Apostle beareth in the study of holiness and preparation for the day of judgement, that both he and the Apostle *Paul* had agreed in substance upon the use that was to be made of the doctrine of Christ's second coming: *Thus as our beloved brother Paul also hath written.* 3. All the faithful Ministers of Christ ought to be so far from lifting up themselves above their fellow-labourers, or lessening the reputation of their persons and labours among the Lords People, even although their fellow-labourers be in some degree inferior to them, or differing from them: yet, and notwithstanding, rebuke them for their failings: That by due severity, they might be to entertain, and to expresse love and compassion, and to conciliate respect so that, notwithstanding, their labours among the Lord's People's sin, and wickedness, might have the advantage of *Paul* in the primary commendation to the Ministry, and argue them



and Christ in the flesh, whom Paul had withstood to the face, and whose failings he had registred in one of his Epistles, *Gal. 2. 13, 14.* doth not lift up himself above Paul, nor labour to weaken his esteem, but doth write of him as his equal, beloved by him, and faithful according to his gifts, and doth commend his Writings as useful for this people, *Even as our beloved brother Paul also, according to the wisdom given unto him, hath written.*

4. The Lord hath not given a like measure of gifts and qualifications for His Service to all his faithful Servants, but to some more, to some, fewer talents, that every one may make use of another, and none may expect fulnesse but in Christ Himself: for, that there were diverse measures, even among the Apostles, is imported in this, that Paul, *according to the wisdom given unto him, hath written.*

5. Whatever measure of gifts or graces any have more than another, it is a free gift of God's, and therefore ought to be humbly and thankfully posselt, and carefully imployed for His honour, who ought to be acknowledged as author of these gifts, not only by those that have them, but by every one who doth discern them in others: for, while this Apostle speaketh of Paul's wisdom, He calleth it *the wisdom given him.* 6. It is the prime commendation of a faithfull Minister, that he hath faithfully imployed his measure, whether it be lesse or more, in serving Christ, and doing good to the souls of His People: for, here it is Paul's commendation, that *according to the wisdom given him, he hath written.*

7. Although it be the duty of one faithfull Minister to keep up the credit of another among the People, Yet ought their commendations one of another to be in sobriety, such as may not detract from the due esteem of those whom they do not commend, and such as may lead peoples thoughts above them that are commended, to God as the author and free-giver of any thing commended in them: for, this Apostle doth sufficiently commend Paul in his Writings, while he saith of him, *According to the wisdom given him, he hath written.* 8. Although it be true, that, and the

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the character of false teachers, to steal the words, and lessen the estimation of other ministers that are more efficient than themselves, that thereby they may cloak their own laziness, and want of God's calling, *Jer. 23, 30.* Yet it is very lawfull, and the duty of the most eminent Ministers of Christ, to make use of the Gifts and Writings of their Fellow-labourers, for clearing of the Truth to themselves and others, and sometimes to cite their testimony for gaining the greater credit to Truth with people: for, so doth this Apostle here, who not only presseth the same Truth that *Paul* had prest, but is not ashamed to avow that he had perused *Paul's* Writings to those *Hebrews*, as also all the rest of his Epistles, wherein he had found that which did agree with his doctrine, *Even as our beloved brother Paul hath also written.* 9. Although the Apostle *Paul* hath not put his name to that Epistle to the *Hebrews*, which is extant in the New Testament, either because he was hatefull to the unconverted *Jews*, or suspected by weak Converts, who were too much addicted to the Levitical Law; or, because he was sufficiently known and of unquestioned authority with the stronger sort; Yet this place of Scripture putteth it out of doubt, that he is the Author thereof: for, it is clear that this Apostle writeth both his Epistles to the Twelve Tribes, by comparing 1 *Epist.* 1. 1. and 2 *Epist.* 1. 1. with 1 *Epist.* 2. 12. and here he asserteth that *Paul* also had written to them; which writing of *Paul's* can be no other than that Epistle to the *Hebrews* which is extant, 1. Because the purpose in *Paul's* writing, to which this Apostle here relateth, is clearly held forth there in *Heb.* 10. 25, 26. 2. Because that which this Apostle speaketh in the following Verse, concerning the difficulty of understanding some passages in *Paul's* writing, doth especially agree to that Epistle. And 3. because that writing of *Paul's* to the *Hebrews*, wherof this Apostle here speaketh, cannot be supposed to be lost, except we would reflect both upon the providence of God, and upon the fidelity of those to whom the Oracles of God were committed, *Rom.* 1. 2.

Chapter 1. *Of the* *Chapter 1.*  
The Lord hath never  
shown us our beloved brother Paul hath written  
many things.

*Ver. 16.* As also in all his Epistles, speaking in them of these  
things, in which are some things hard to be understood,  
which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they  
do also the other Scriptures, unto their own destruction.

The Apostle, having confirmed his doctrine from Paul's  
Epistles to the Hebrews, taketh occasion to commend all  
the rest of his Epistles, as confirming the same Truth;  
and withall removeth a prejudice, which hath been at  
that time rise, against Paul's Writings, as dark and ob-  
scure, showing that there were only some few things in  
his Writings hard to be understood, which none but un-  
humbled and watton spirits would pervert and mistake,  
as they would do much more of the Scripture: to their  
own damnation. Hence *Lect. 1.* Although the frequent  
pressing of necessary Truths upon Peoples be oftentimes  
a burden to their corrupt nature, *Jer. 23. 33.* Yet must not  
the Lord's Ministers weary to repeat and inculcate one  
and the same Truth to them, not knowing when life and  
power from God may accompany that Truth to their  
heart, which hath been often told them before, and as  
often slighted by them. See *Philp. 3. 1.* for, this Apostle  
presses the same Truth upon the Hebrews; which he knew  
Paul had press before upon them, and upon all others in  
all his Epistles, which were all intended for the common  
good of the whole Church in all ages; *As also in all his*  
*Epistles speaking in them of these things.* 2. It hath pleased  
the Lord to expresse some parts of His Will in His  
Word, that the sharpest-sighted will not at the first, nor  
easily take up the meaning thereof, that all men study the  
Scriptures may be made humble in the sense of their own  
blindness, earnest in imploying Christ for His Spirit, and  
may be quickened to pains in meditation, comparing one  
Scripture with another, and the use of other commanded  
meanes, that after the use of all, they might they get in  
place

*Chap. 3. second Epistle general of PAUL.*

places formerly dark to them, may be the more effectually  
of: for, there is in *Paul's Epistles* *some things hard to be*  
*understood.* 1. Although no man without special Illumi-  
nation from God, can savingly take up any Truth re-  
vealed in Scripture: 1 *Cor.* 2. 14. Yet is there much of the  
Lord's mind revealed therein, in it self plain and easy to  
be understood, by them who humbly depend upon  
Christ's teaching, in the use of His own means: So that  
the simplest, who desire to know as much as may save  
and comfort their souls, ought not to be hindered or dis-  
couraged in the study of the Scriptures, in which (the  
Apostle saith only) *there are some things hard to be under-*  
*stood,* importing that there are therein many things plain,  
and such as may be easily understood. 4. Those Truths  
which are most darkly propounded in Scripture, are not  
impossible to be understood, if men would seriously exer-  
cise their wit about them, and humbly imply Christ for  
understanding, as the Saints have done, *1 Pet.* 1. 19. 33,  
34, 97. for, the Apostle saith only, *there are some things*  
*hard* (importing, not only that there are many things  
plain, but also that there is nothing impossible) *to be un-*  
*derstood.* 5. Although humane learning, being sancti-  
fied in the use thereof, may prove a blessed mean of fit-  
ting men for the service of God, *Dan.* 1. 17. *1 Th.* 5. 22.  
and 21. 3. Yet it is not so much the want thereof, nor yet  
any obscurity that is in the Scriptures, which causeth  
men dangerously to mistake and wrest the Word of God,  
as that men will not become humble Disciples of Christ,  
renouncing their own wit, and giving themselves up to  
Christ's teaching: for, the word here in the Original,  
*διδακται*, is not that which is made use of in *Sotipotes*,  
*1 Th.* 4. 13. to signifie the want of humane instruction, but  
it is a word that signifies to be undisciplined, or not taught  
by Jesus Christ, in which sense, they that are *undisciplined*  
*by the Spirit* are. 6. Another special cause of mistaking  
and mistaking, these things in Scripture which are hard  
to be understood, is that men labour not to fit their  
Hearts to the knowledge, love and practice of Truth.

are plain, but have their hearts distracted with the carnal pleasures of this present world: for, it is they that are wrestle in this sense, that wrest the Scriptures. 7. To wrest the Scriptures, is, to endeavour to force them to speak contrary to the intent of the Spirit that endited them, in defence of vile errors or profane practices: for, there is a metaphor in the word, which is translated *wrest*, taken from those who by tortures labour to compel the innocent to speak against their mind. 8. They that wrest one plate of Scripture, will readily wrest many more, there being a connexion between one error and another, as there is between one Truth and another: for, they that wrest *Paul's Epistles*, they wrest also other Scriptures. 9. The hazard of men forcing a sense of their own upon the Scriptures, contrary to the mind of the Spirit that endited them, is no lesse than the everlasting destruction of them that do it: for, they that wrest the Scriptures, do it to their own destruction.

*Verf. 17. Ye therefore, Beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness.*

The fifth use of the Apostle's former doctrine, is an exhortation to constancy. The sum whereof is, That since they had been clearly forewarned of their spiritual dangers, and informed concerning the remedies thereof, they should be the more wary, lest they be drawn away from that way of Truth and Holinesse wherein they had been, through the Lord's grace, in some good measure established. Hence *Learn*, 1. Clear forewarnings of spiritual dangers, and informations concerning the remedies thereof, do lay upon the Lord's people a great obligation to watchfulnesse; it being a great aggravation of their guiltinesse, if after these, they be intemperate: for, the Apostle maketh the fore-knowledge they had of these things by his former doctrine, a special manner of watchfulnesse. *Transfers, Beloved, seeing ye know these things before,*

Chap. 3. *second Epistle general of PETER.*

*fore, beware.* 2. There is no error nor temptation so great that hath overtaken others, whereof those that are dear to beloved of God and His Saints, ought not to entertain so much fear, as to make them very strict in watching, lest they be ensnared with the same, considering that there is a friend to these in their unmortified part; *Beloved, beware lest ye also be led away with the error of the wicked.*

3. Although the Lord's People can, neither totally; nor finally fall away from Truth or Holiness, *Job. 17. 13. 12.* Yet those who have been in some good measure established in the knowledge of the Truth, and practice of holy duties, may for a time, and in a great measure, fall from both; as is imported in this warning, *Beware lest ye also being led away with the error of the wicked, fall.*

4. The possibility of Believers falling for a time, should provoke them to much circumspection, and, as the word here signifieth, to keep very strict watch over themselves, which exercise the Lord hath appointed to be a special mean of His Peoples preservation, *Beware lest ye also being led away with the error of the wicked, fall.* 5. The Lord's People have a steadfastness proper to themselves, which no hypocrite can attain unto, whereby they do adhere to the Truth and Way of Christ; not for the applause or example of others, or any worldly advantage whatsoever, but because their minds are enlightened to know, and their hearts renewed to believe and love the Truth for its own worth, and for his authority that revealeth it; for, the words in the Original are, *Beware lest ye fall from your own proper steadfastness.*

*Verf. 18. But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ: to Him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.*

The sixth and last use of the former doctrine, is an exhortation to the study of a continual growth and progress in grace and knowledge; and this the Apostle preaches, as a person began to attain to that which he professed.

the same with us, viz. *steadfastness*; and *cleave* with a  
 heart of praise to Jesus Christ. Hence *Learn*, 1. It is not  
 enough for the Lord's People to maintain that measure  
 of grace which they have already attained; but they  
 must labour to find the lively exercise and daily growth  
 of every grace; for, the Apostle, having exhorted us *stead-*  
*fastness* in what they had already attained, doth add  
 this, *But grow in grace*. 2. Growth in grace is a special  
 preservative from apostasy, there being no possibility to  
 keep what we have attained, except it be improved, and  
 be upon the growing hand, *Mat. 25. 29.* For this exhor-  
 tation is added to the former, as a special means of attain-  
 ing to *steadfastness*, *Grow in grace, &c.* 3. They that would  
 have grace to thrive in their hearts, must labour for a  
 daily increase of knowledge in their minds concerning  
 Christ's sovereignty, His offices, and the benefits we have  
 by Him; for, as growth in grace is here prest as a special  
 mean to *steadfastness*, so growth in knowledge is prest  
 as a special mean of attaining to growth in grace; *But*  
*grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour*  
*Jesus Christ.* 4. It is the duty of all who have any right  
 thoughts of Christ, to break forth some way in His praise,  
 and to ascribe glory to Him, who, being the Sovereign  
 Lord of Heaven and Earth, is become the Saviour of sin-  
 ners, and hath clothed Himself with Offices answerable  
 to all their necessities, as is imported in the names of  
 Christ that are here; for, the Apostle, that knew Him  
 well to be such a one, taketh up the song, which all that  
 know Him should follow and keep up in their hearts,  
*To Him be glory.* 5. Praise is a duty, where with all our  
 other duties should be closed, both for the help we find  
 therein, paid for the pardon we believe we have for our  
 failings; upon both which grounds the Apostle doth  
 bid us close with praise, *To Him be glory.* 6. Praise is an  
 essential to the discharge whereof we are bound to our  
 Creator, and as a duty of ourselves, as the Lord hath  
 said, *Isaiah 42. 10.* *To Him be glory, &c.*

